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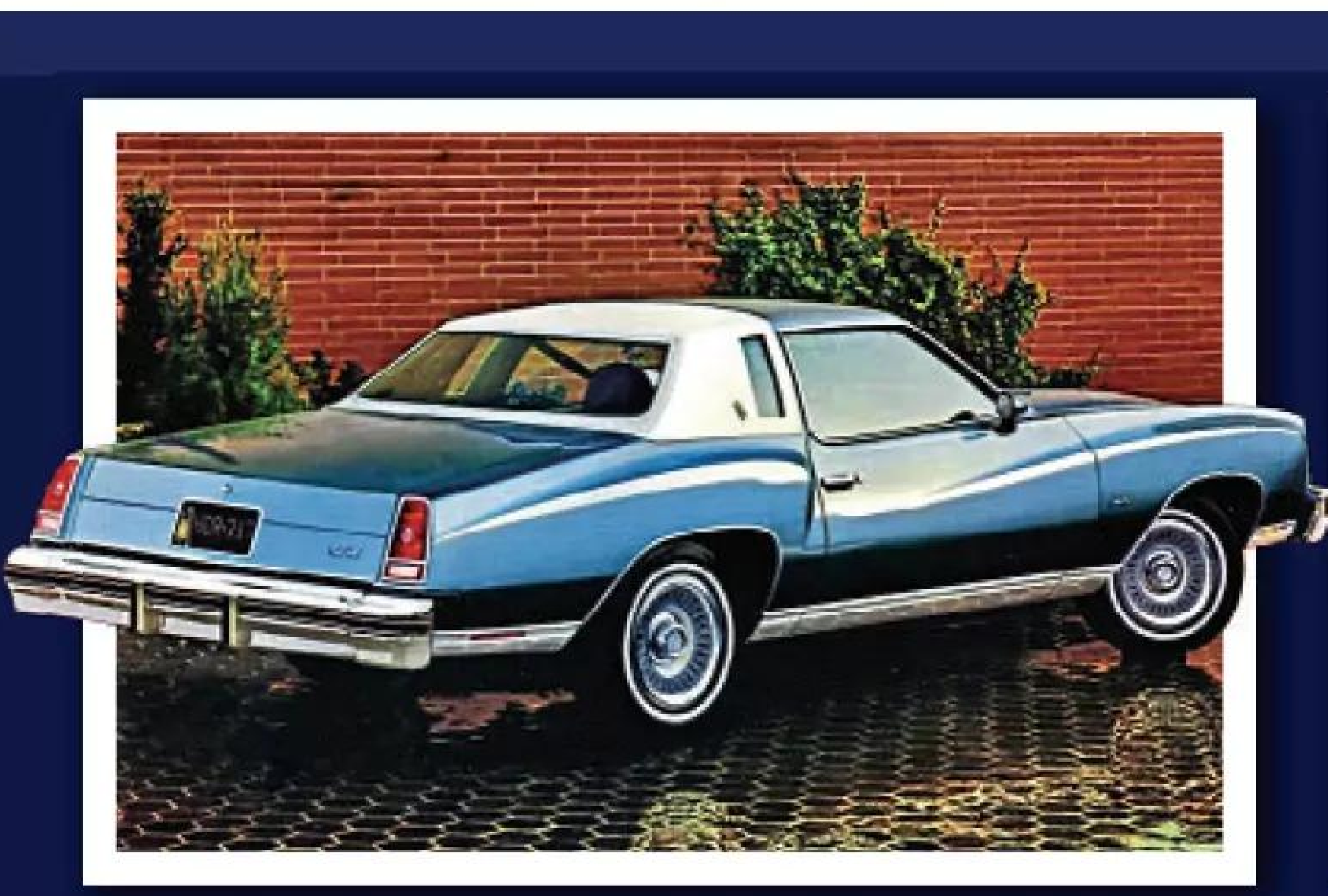

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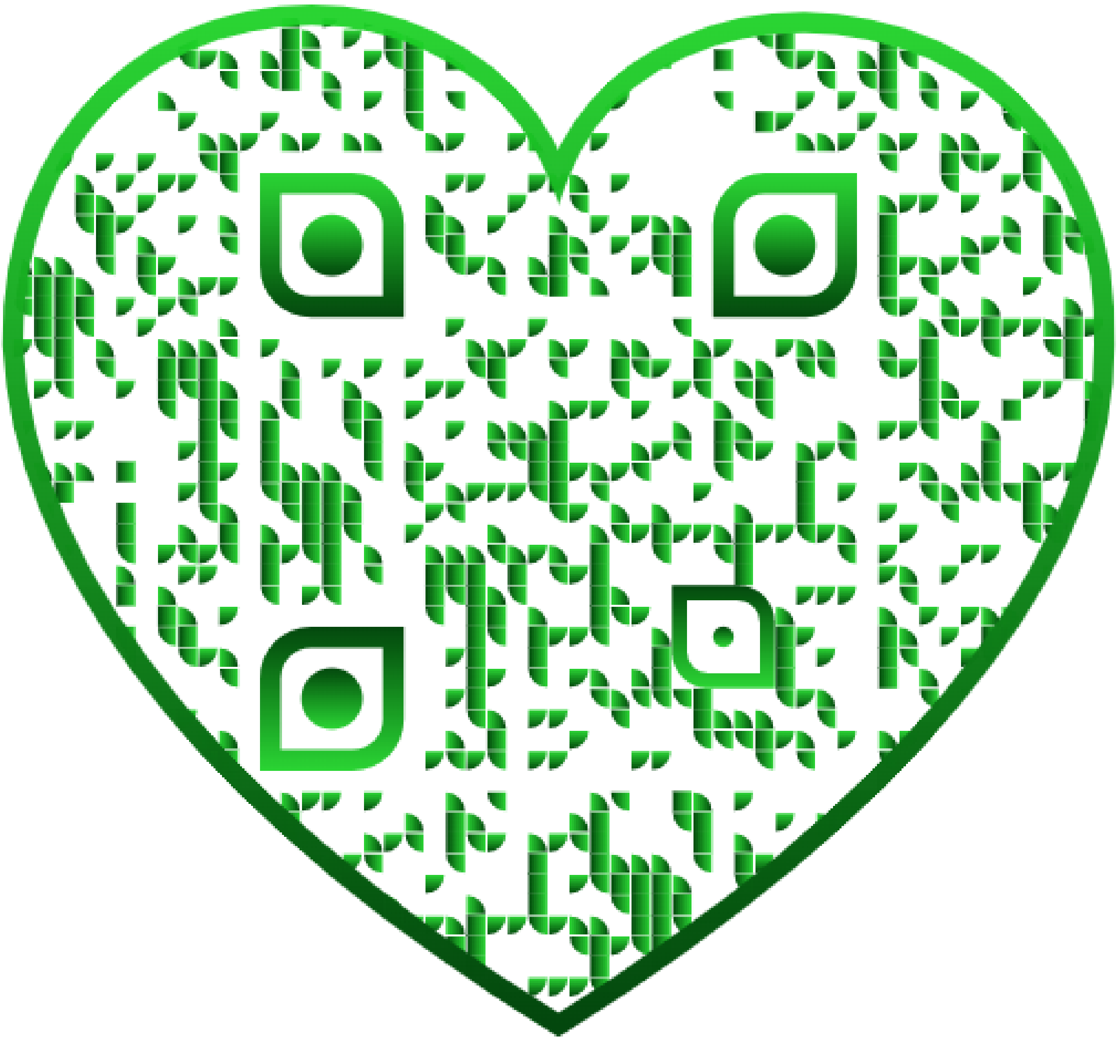

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Ben Klemenzson

Viewpoint

PHEW, WHAT A SCORCHER!

It most definitely is show season! And this month's *Classic American* has plenty of evidence of that in the News pages and in the body of the magazine, where the shows and events of this year's summer so far are covered. We've had what must be one of the sunniest, hottest Mays on record and long may it continue – it's been quite a few years since we've had a long, hot summer like the famous one of 1976 that's often used as the benchmark for what a really long, hot summer should be like!

This month's magazine carries a feature on wiring-up and installing amber turn signals should you so feel the desire/necessity on your classic American vehicle. Many people do this regardless of whether their car legally requires them or not, simply as a safety precaution. However, now that many classic American vehicles don't require an MoT, one wonders if we'll start to see more cars with red turn signals (legal or otherwise!).

I've resisted fitting amber turn signals to my '64 Ford Falcon (legally they don't require them) as I like the original American 'look', although the subsequent absence of hazard lights, especially in this age of dangerous 'smart' motorways (don't get me started!) does make me wonder if this might be an upgrade – although not sympathetic to the period – worth investing in. I use radial tyres, surely this is the same principle? What do you think?!

Ben Klemenzson

Ben Klemenzson, editor
bklemenzson@mortons.co.uk

19 GEORGIA 70
ANM 685H
BACK TO LIFE CARS
Chevelle

Image: Matt Richardson

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CLASSIC AMERICAN

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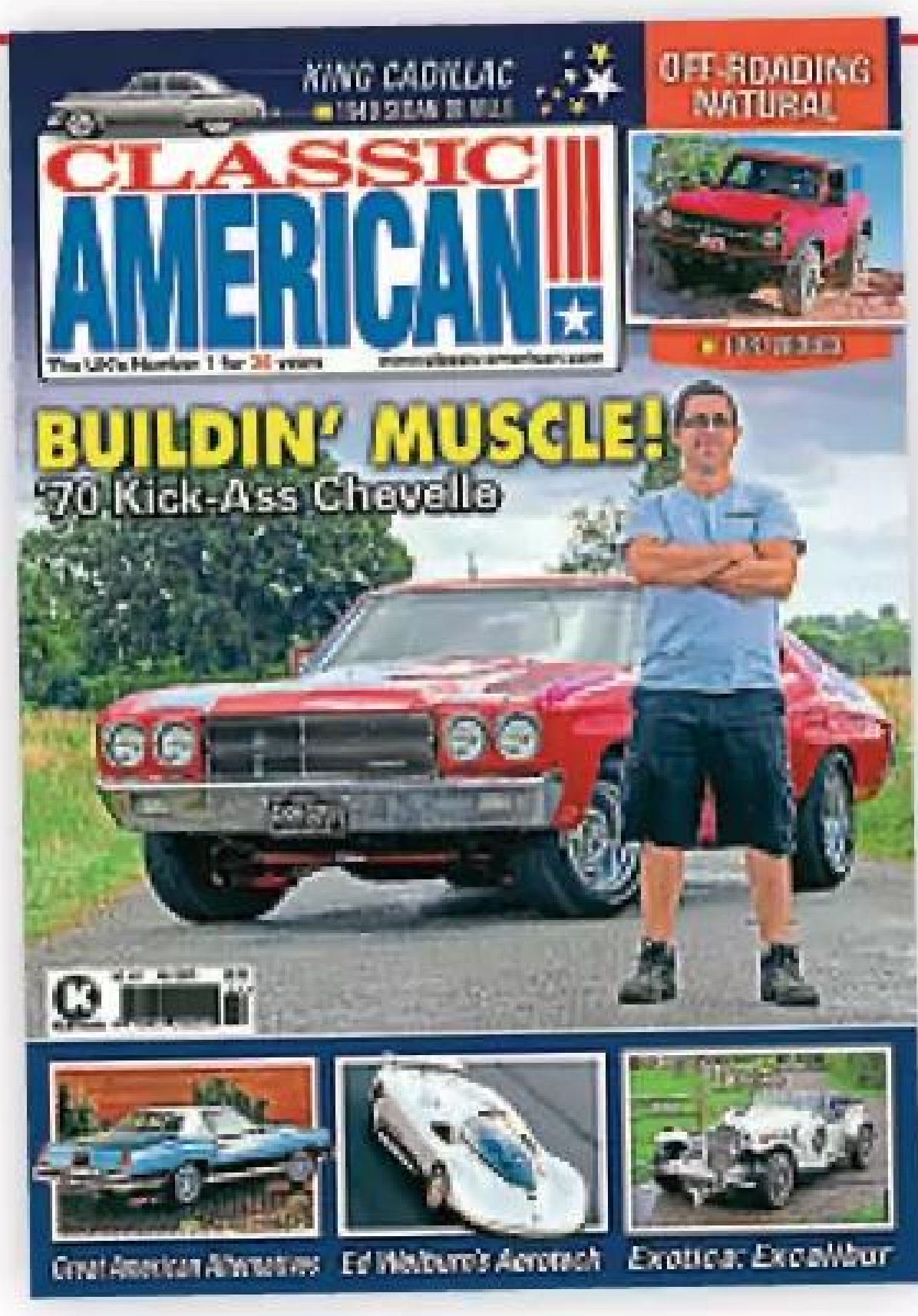

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STARS & STRIPES 2025 IS HERE!

Stars & Stripes is fun for all the family!

If you're looking for something to do this summer, look no further than the well-established *Classic American* Stars & Stripes show sponsored by Hagerty which returns on July 5-6.

Get set for a fun-filled weekend, with a dazzling array of customs, hot rods, pick-up trucks and an eclectic assortment of the finest American motorcycles and other vehicles in the UK.

The trade village will be filled with specialist traders and autojumblers offering everything from second-hand spares, LED lights, tools, abrasives, adhesives, books, brochures, specialist tyres, shipping and wheels, along with all sorts of collectible Americana. Back again is the ever-popular classic funfair, the wall of death, an impressive airsoft/paintball range, along with countless other traders who will be offering their expertise and kit to make the weekend as entertaining as possible.

The Stars & Stripes show will play host to one of this year's heats of the Kingstown Shipping-Vintage Tyres Car of the Year competition, so we'll be looking for a suitable car to invite to the finals at the NEC Classic Motor Show in November.

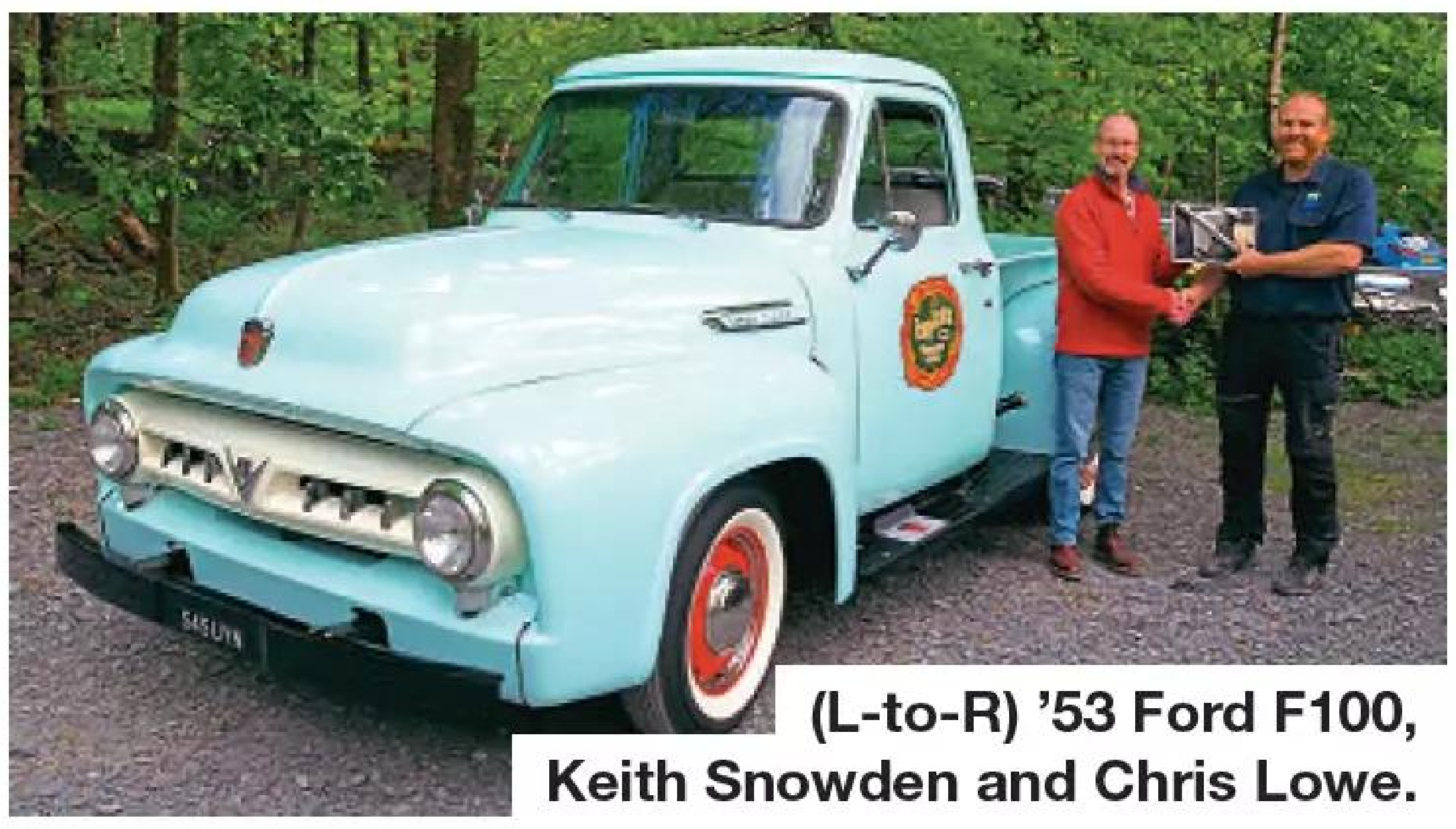
Show cars on display always include an incredible variety of classic American greats – previous years have included everything from the *Classic American* heat-winning 1954 Kaiser Darrin, to various other rarities such as a 1936 Packard Sedanca, 1928 Plymouth 'Q' Roadster, Dodge Vipers and AC Cobras. There's also a whole section with modified big wheel Hummers and impressive big rig trucks, including Peterbilts and Kenworths. The show's a great opportunity to meet up with enthusiast clubs and participating clubs include the Classic Corvette Club UK, Mustang Owners GB, South Cheshire American Car Club and the American Auto Club Northwest.

CoTY heat-winning 1954 Kaiser Darrin, 2023.

Stan Prosser and the two beautiful ladies in his life.

The *Classic American* Stars & Stripes Show sponsored by Hagerty takes place on July 5-6, with gates opening from 9.30am both days. Advance tickets are £11.50 online until June 30 or £14 at the gate, with free entry for children under 16. Park entry charges apply (£9 per car). For full details, visit www.theclassiccarshows.com

LAKELAND LOLAPALOOZA!


(L-to-R) ’53 Ford F100, Keith Snowden and Chris Lowe.

Hundreds of vehicles and their owners arrived at Lakeland Motor Museum over the recent bank holiday weekend for their annual spring Classic Drive & Ride In Day. The popular events draws in a wide range of vehicles from right across the UK, as they compete to win the coveted trophy – handmade at the museum with a combination of three interesting finds from the workshop: a 1955 Chevrolet Bel-Air hood ornament, bolted to a Wrights unused British registration plate, complemented by a set of Cee-Tee pliers, all the way from New York, which are used as the stand on the back.

Engine is a 106bhp, 239cu in flathead 8.

Smart red steel wheels and dish hubcaps.

The trophy is presented to the owner of the most interesting or unique vehicle. Chosen and presented by museum curator, Chris Lowe, it’s a much sought-after honour. The weekend’s winner was Preston local, Keith Snowden, and his 1953 Ford F100 Stepside truck. This classic piece of Americana features a 4.0-litre V8 flathead engine. It was purchased by Mr Snowden in 2016 as an unfinished project. He completed a ‘nut and bolt’ restoration, finalising it in 2023. The three-speed gearbox presented little problem to Mr Snowden due to his experience in rebuilding gearboxes at KN Transmission of Longridge, Preston.

Commenting on why he chose this vehicle to win, museum curator Chris Lowe said: “I selected it due to the amazing attention to detail throughout the vehicle. The striking aquamarine colour with red wheels really stood out from the crowd. The event once again proved to be busy and popular and I want to thank all those who came along to show off their cars and motorcycles. We hold regular events and encourage enthusiasts to continue to showcase their wonderful examples of motoring through the ages. No booking is required, it’s free to turn up and everyone is welcome.”

The museum, at Backbarrow in South Cumbria, is a popular destination for classic vehicle enthusiasts where each driver displays their pride and joy and compWares notes with visitors and other vehicle owners. Indoors, the museum’s extensive collection of cars, motorbikes and artefacts was on display as usual, with occupants of the classic vehicles participating in the Drive & Ride Day event offered a discount on entry to the museum itself.

The Lakeland Motor Museum is the home of a unique collection of 30,000 exhibits, including more than 150 classic cars and motorbikes. There’s also the popular riverside Café Ambio on site – where enthusiasts can take a break from their vehicles and enjoy a refreshing meal. The next Drive & Ride In Day takes place on Saturday, October 4.

For more information see: www.lakelandmotormuseum.co.uk or call: 015395 30400. Lakeland Motor Museum Limited, Old Blue Mill, Backbarrow, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 8TA.

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EVENT REPORT

NEW MALDEN, SURREY

April 20, 2025

KRISPY KREME 20TH ANNIVERSARY MEET

Words and photography: Zack Stiling

The suburban Surrey town of New Malden used to be a sleepy sort of place, an unassuming tangle of leafy residential roads which you might pass through en route from Wimbledon to Surbiton without ever noticing you'd been there. All that started to change in 2005 when a certain Krispy Kreme moved into a closed-down 1930s pub. News reached Dave Williams and got him thinking – these Krispy Kreme people had a large car park, a bottomless supply of doughnuts and a single-storey extension which, if you squinted, could look a bit like a diner in Sacramento. In other words, it was the perfect place for an American and custom car meet!

Dave spread the word and, on the third Sunday of April in 2005, a motley assortment of owners of some of Surrey and south London's most interesting cars assembled for coffee and doughnuts. Then they did it all over again the next month, and the next, until, all of a sudden, New Malden was on the map! Twenty years later, car enthusiasts still sacrifice their lie-in every third Sunday to partake of the jolly atmosphere that descends upon Shannon Corner – even in the January sleet and snow, the hard core turn out for their Krispy Kreme fix.

With the 20th anniversary being celebrated on April 20, everybody made a special effort to be present, and the result was a splendid morning. Mr Williams booked the sun, and everything from Fifties cruisers to Seventies muscle, via all styles of customs, turned up to wish Krispy Kreme a happy birthday. Nobody could ask for more, except for another 20 years just like the last… ★

Nick Arlett's rare White PDQ.

Alex Szczepanski's Seventies survivor woodie.

Air-cooled Corvair 95 custom.

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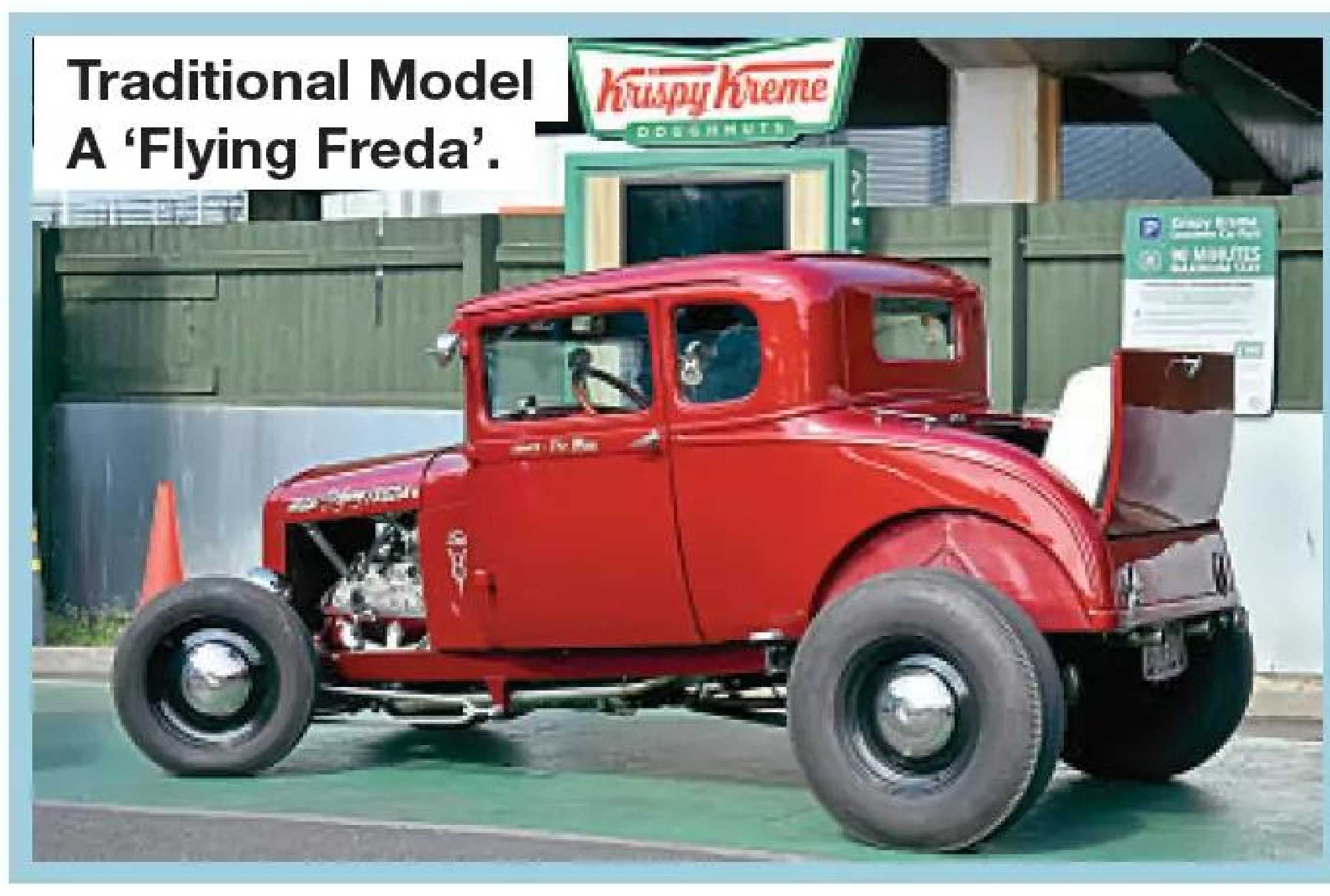
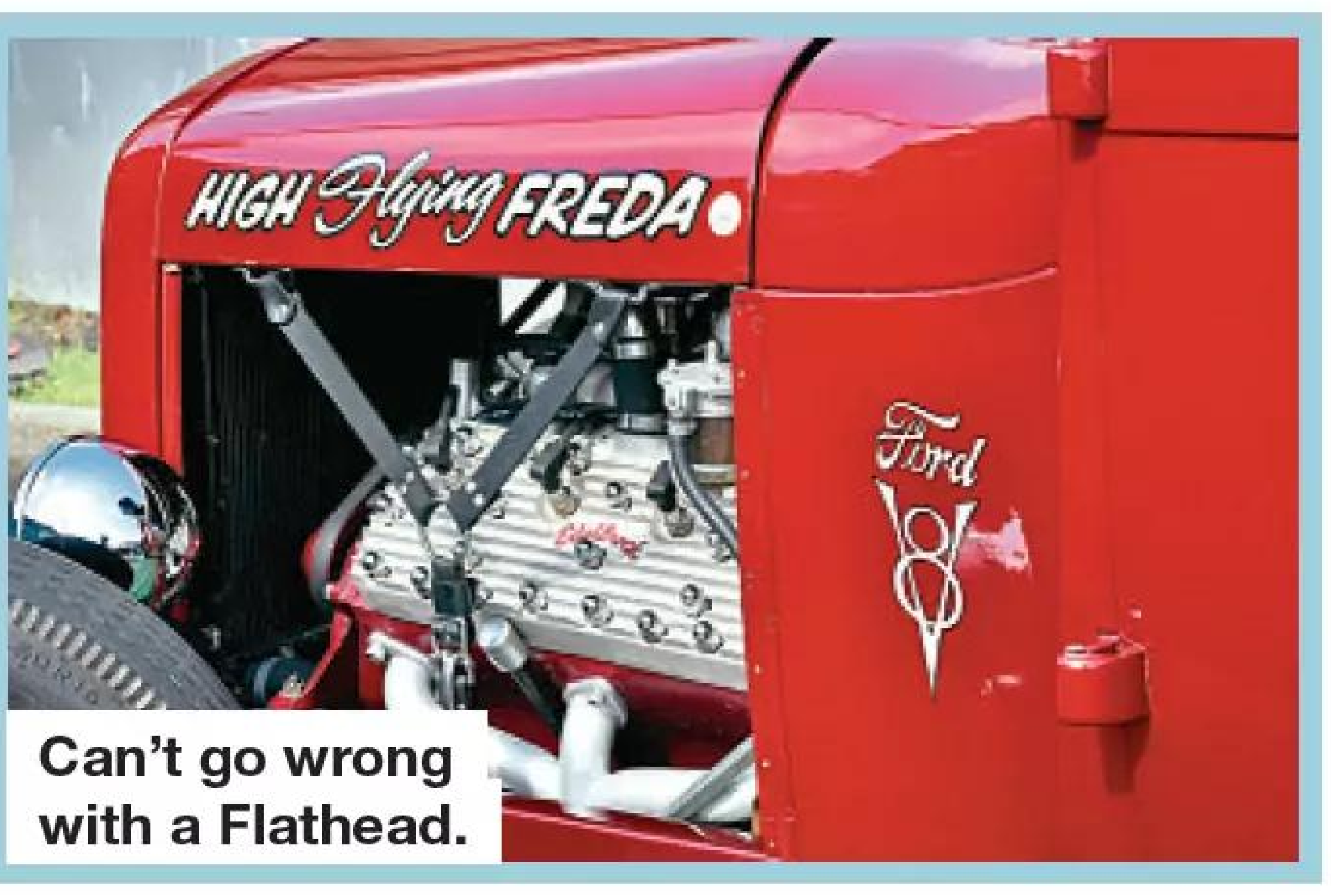
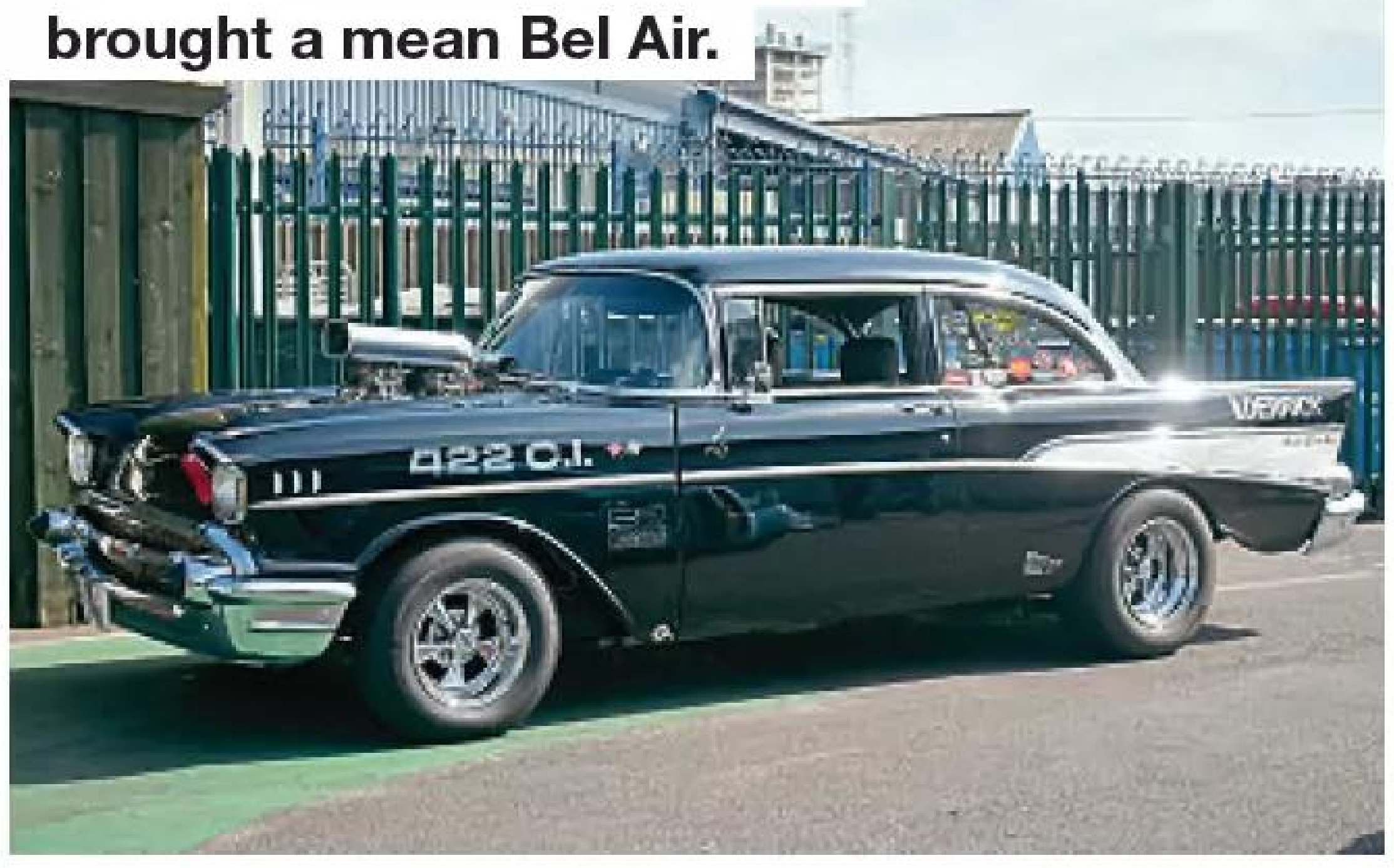

Krispy Kreme
DOUGHNUTS

Traditional Model A 'Flying Freda'.


HIGH Flying FREDA
Ford
V8

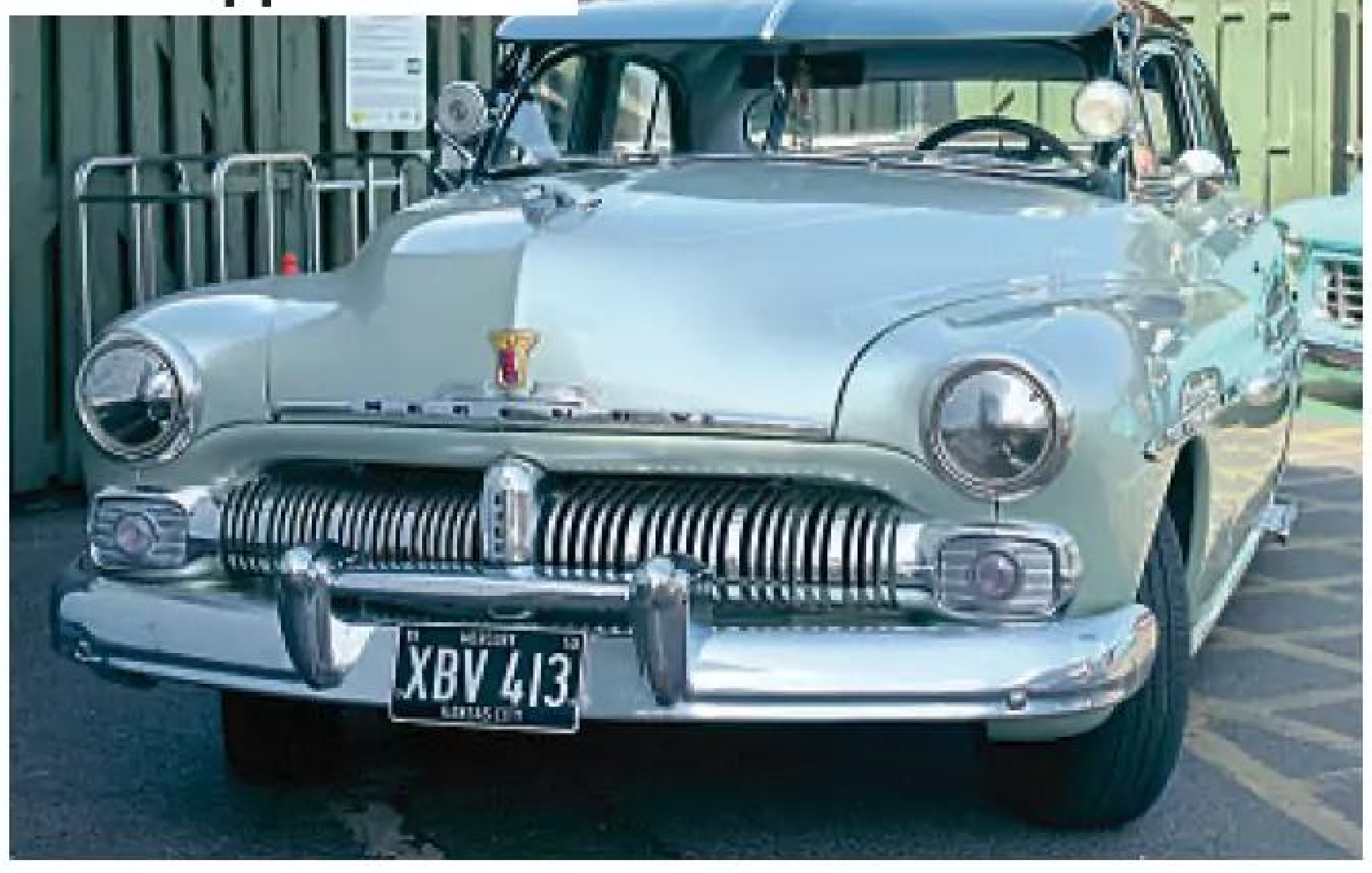
Can't go wrong with a Flathead.

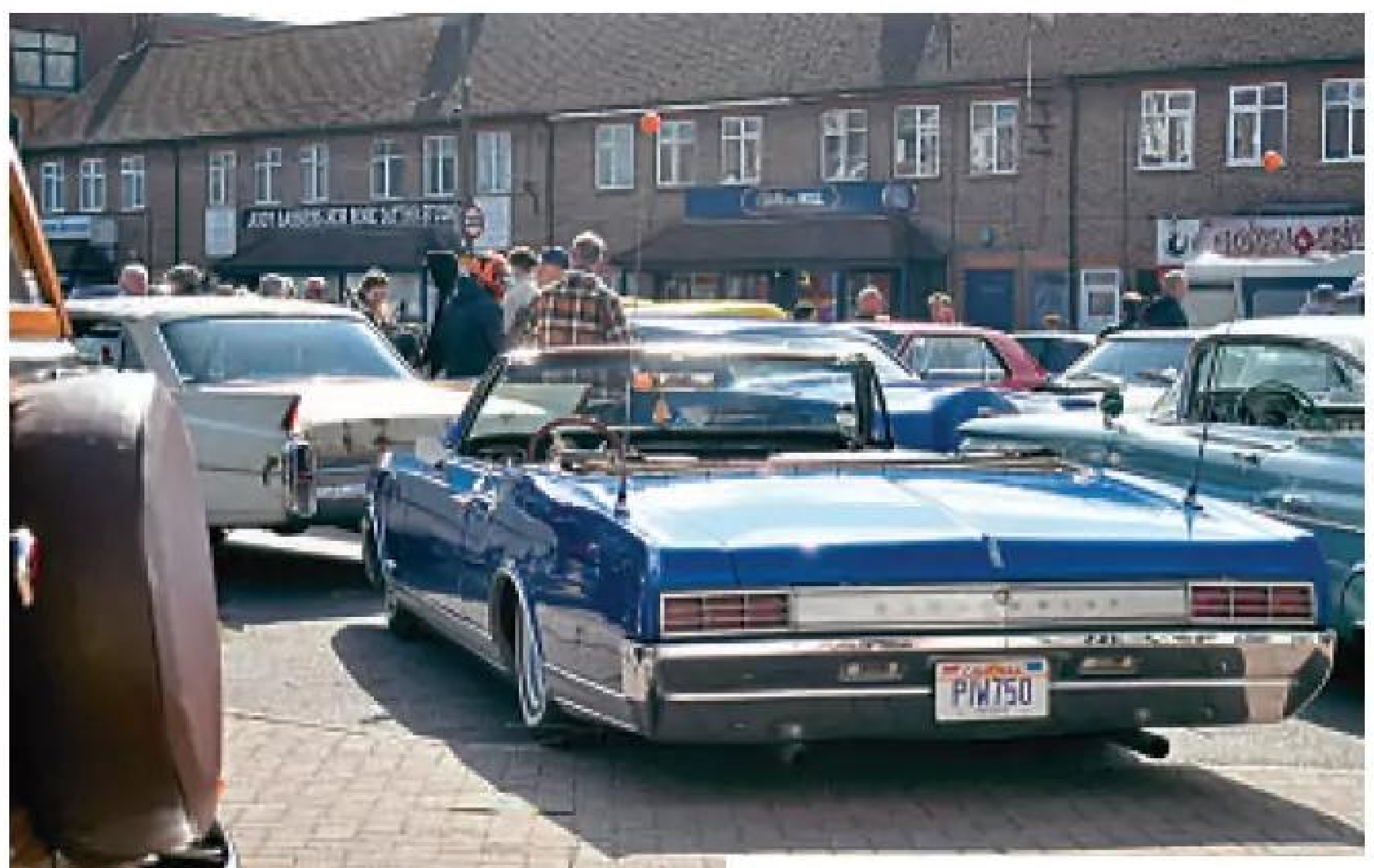
Dream Cars' Milton Homan brought a mean Bel Air.



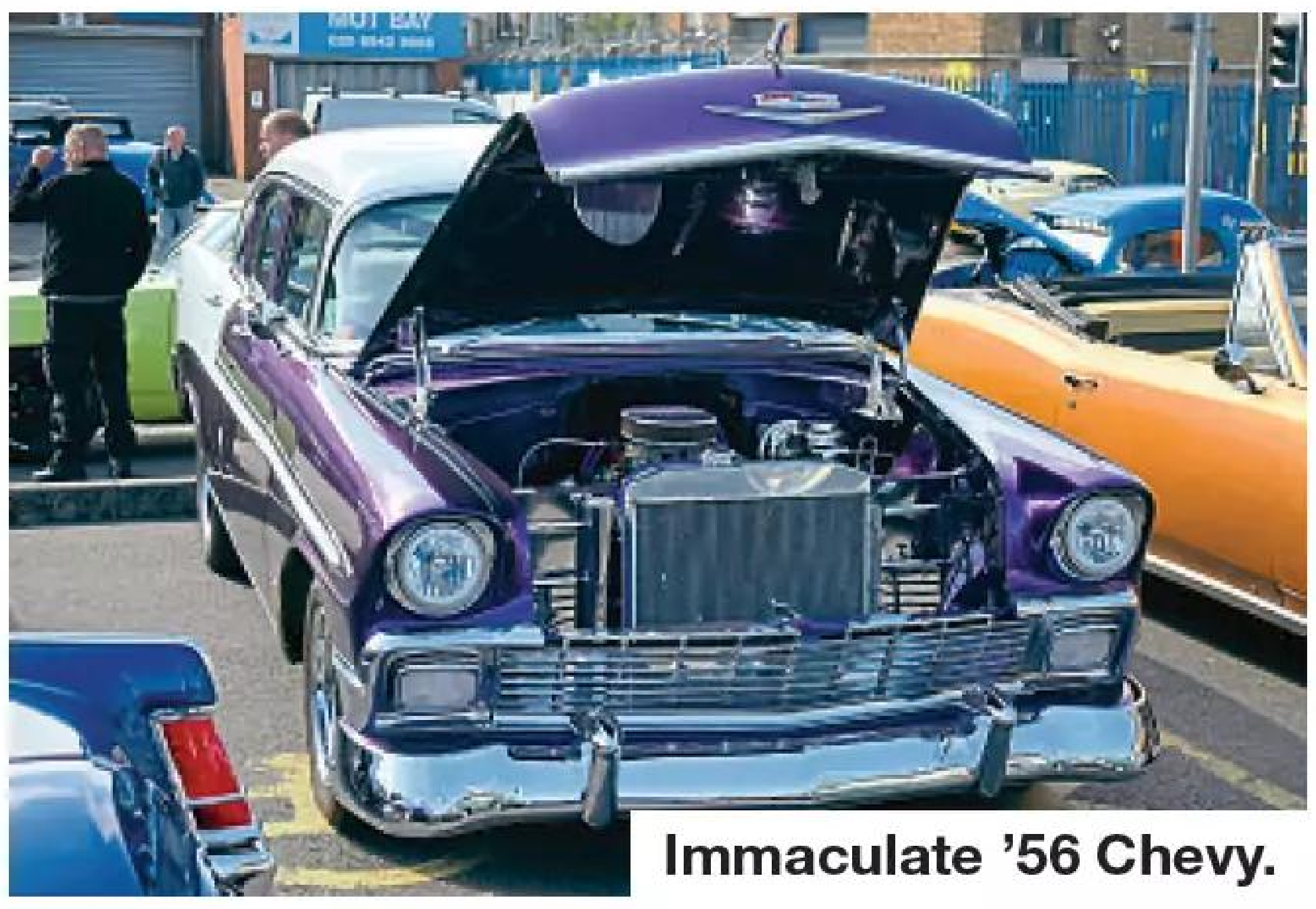
CHAMPION for TIMBER
BONNEVILLE
CHEVROLET

Not often you see an unchopped Merc.



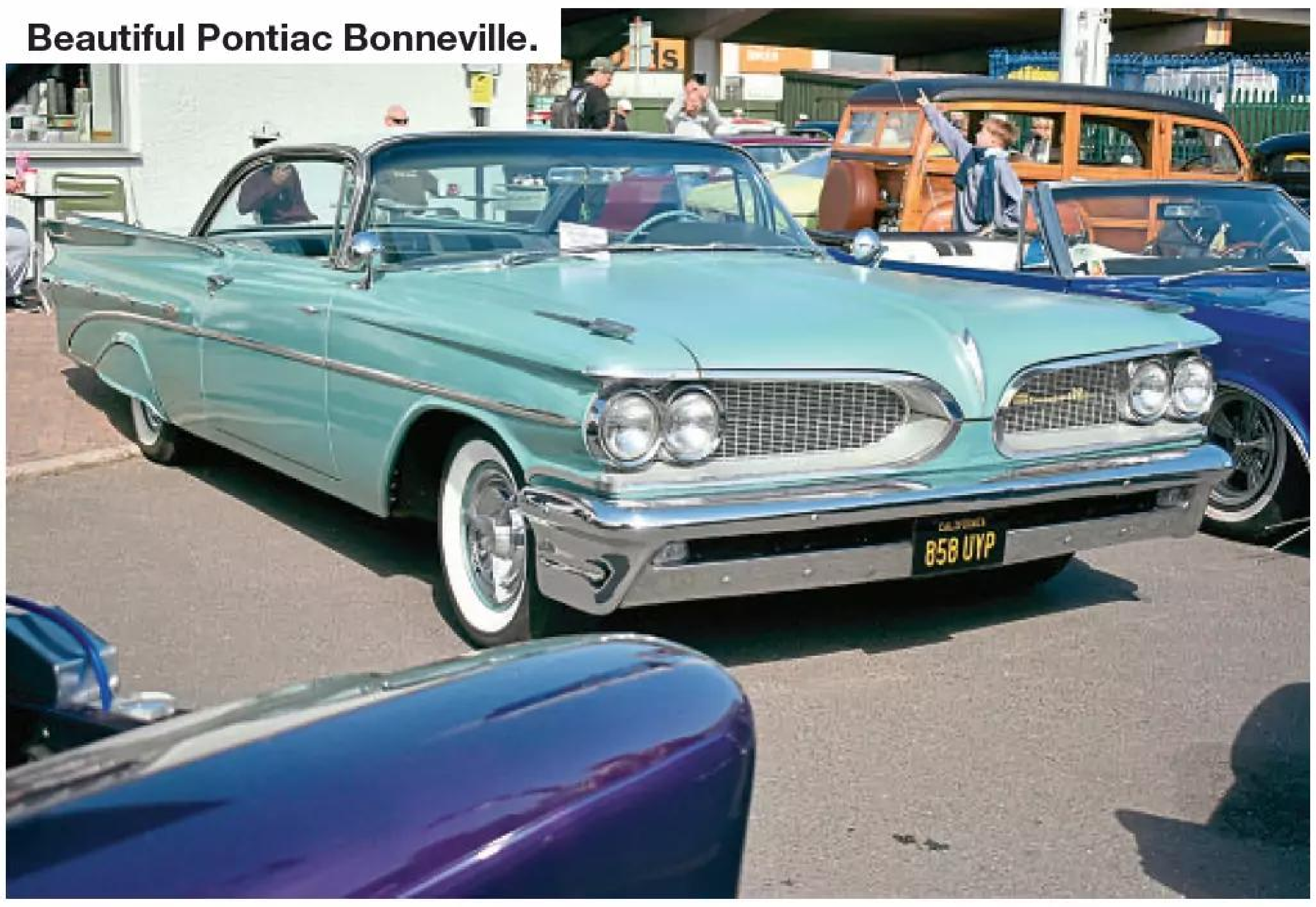


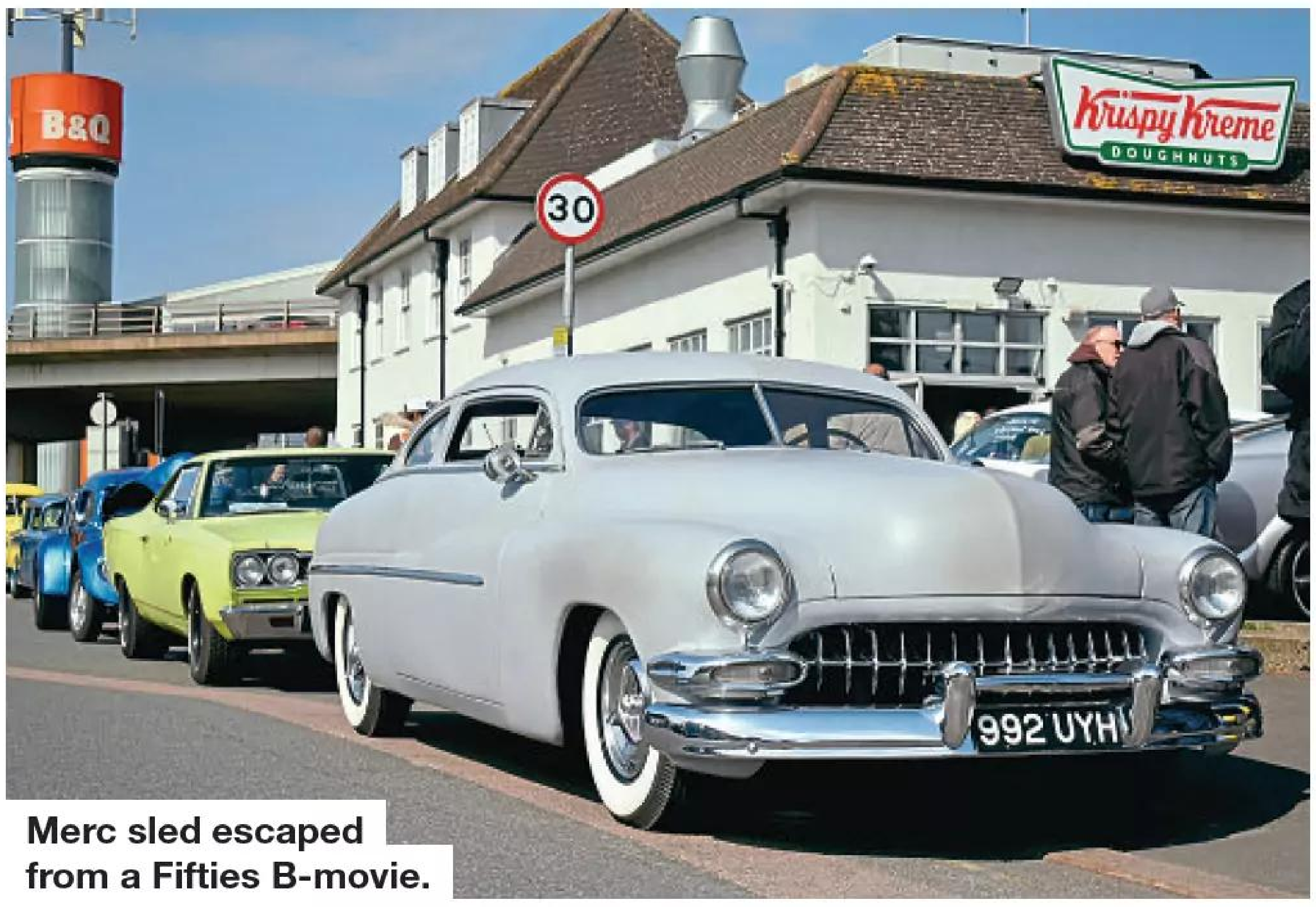
Oldsmobile lowrider never misses a meeting.



Immaculate '56 Chevy.

Beautiful Pontiac Bonneville.




B&Q
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Merc sled escaped from a Fifties B-movie.

Mild custom '49 Ford.

'55 Chevy wagon's a KK regular.

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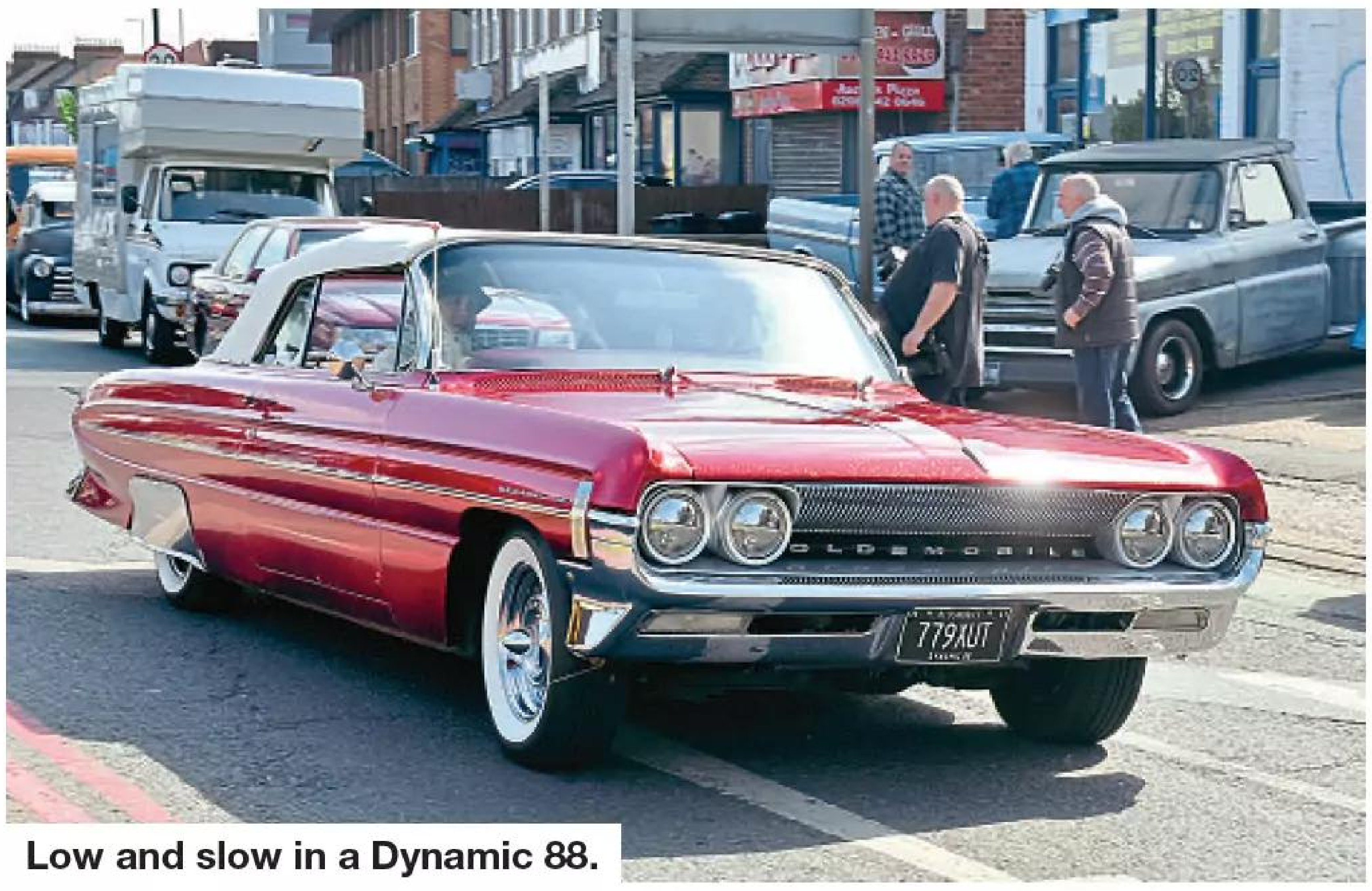

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USAUTOMOTIVE FUELS THE ACTION AT SANTA POD'S STREET WEEKEND!

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USAutomotive, the UK's leading supplier of high-quality parts for American vehicles, has announced its involvement in Street Weekend, the premier Drag & Drive event in the UK, hosted at the legendary Santa Pod Raceway.

As a proud sponsor of the American Bodied Vehicles class at Street Weekend, USAutomotive will be providing the official qualifying stickers that competitors need to participate in the category.

Stickers will be available at USAutomotive's stand at Santa Pod on the morning of Friday, June 14, or they have been available to be collected in advance, along with a goody bag, from USAutomotive HQ in Bedford between May 19 and June 13 (9am–5pm).

There's a £750 prize pot up for grabs in the American Bodied Vehicle class, with £450 for the quickest, £200 for second across the line, and £100 for third place. So, participants can expect fierce competition as they battle it out for top honours, and a healthy cash reward. Whether racing for glory or just to be part of the action, it's set to be an unmissable showdown of muscle and speed.

"We've spent nearly 30 years supporting American vehicles in the UK, so being part of Street Weekend feels like coming full circle," said Jane Bassett, director at USAutomotive. "It's more than just an event – it's a celebration of the community, the cars, and the culture we've built our business around. We're proud to support the drivers and be right there in the heart of the action."

USAutomotive's knowledgeable team will be on hand at their Bedford HQ for drivers who choose to stop by, showcasing a curated selection of parts and products that have made the company the go-to destination for American vehicle owners across the UK. Drivers and attendees will also have the chance to speak with experts, ask questions, and pick up a goody bag.

Street Weekend takes place from June 13-15, delivering an adrenaline-fuelled mix of drag racing, technical road challenges and a vibrant gathering of passionate drivers. USAutomotive is proud to support an event that perfectly aligns with its mission: enhancing the performance, reliability and longevity of American vehicles on British roads.

About USAutomotive

Founded in 1997 and based in Bedford, USAutomotive is the UK's premier supplier of high-quality parts for American vehicles. From 1950s classics to modern trucks and SUVs, USAutomotive stocks more than 20,000 parts and accessories sourced from trusted US manufacturers. With a team of experts sharing more than 165 years of combined experience, the company supports individual owners, professional garages and film/TV productions across the UK.

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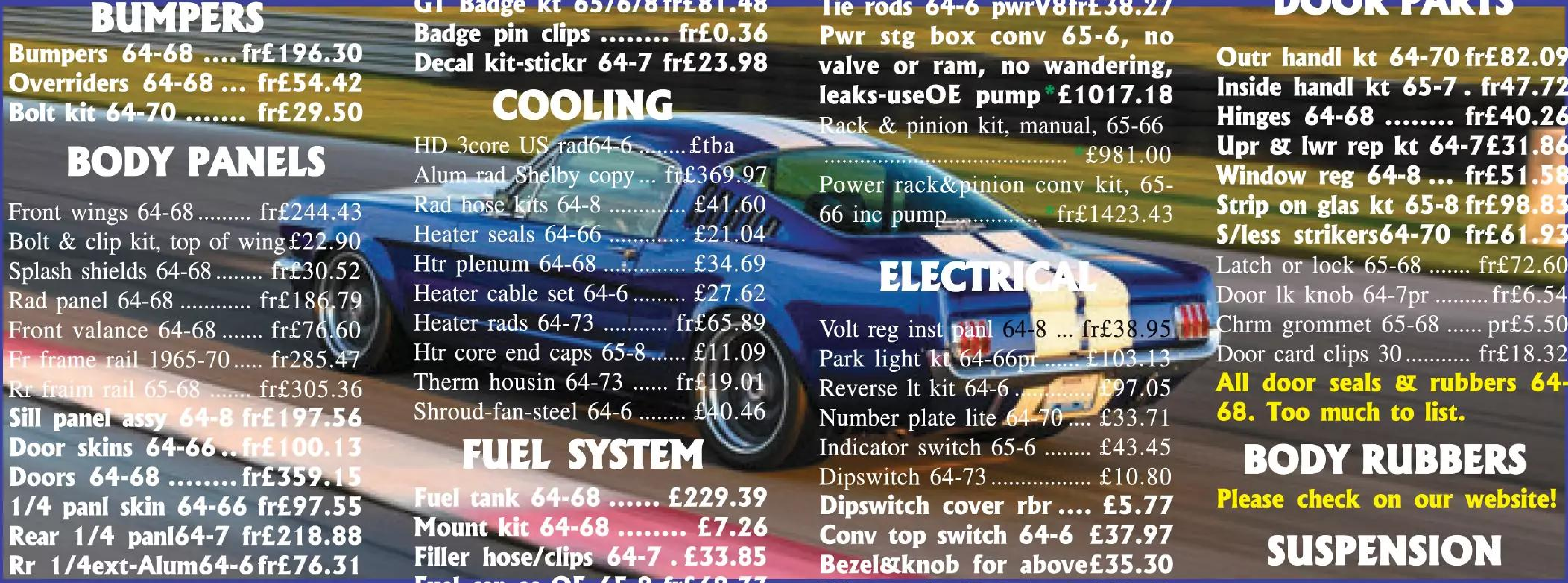

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EVENT REPORT

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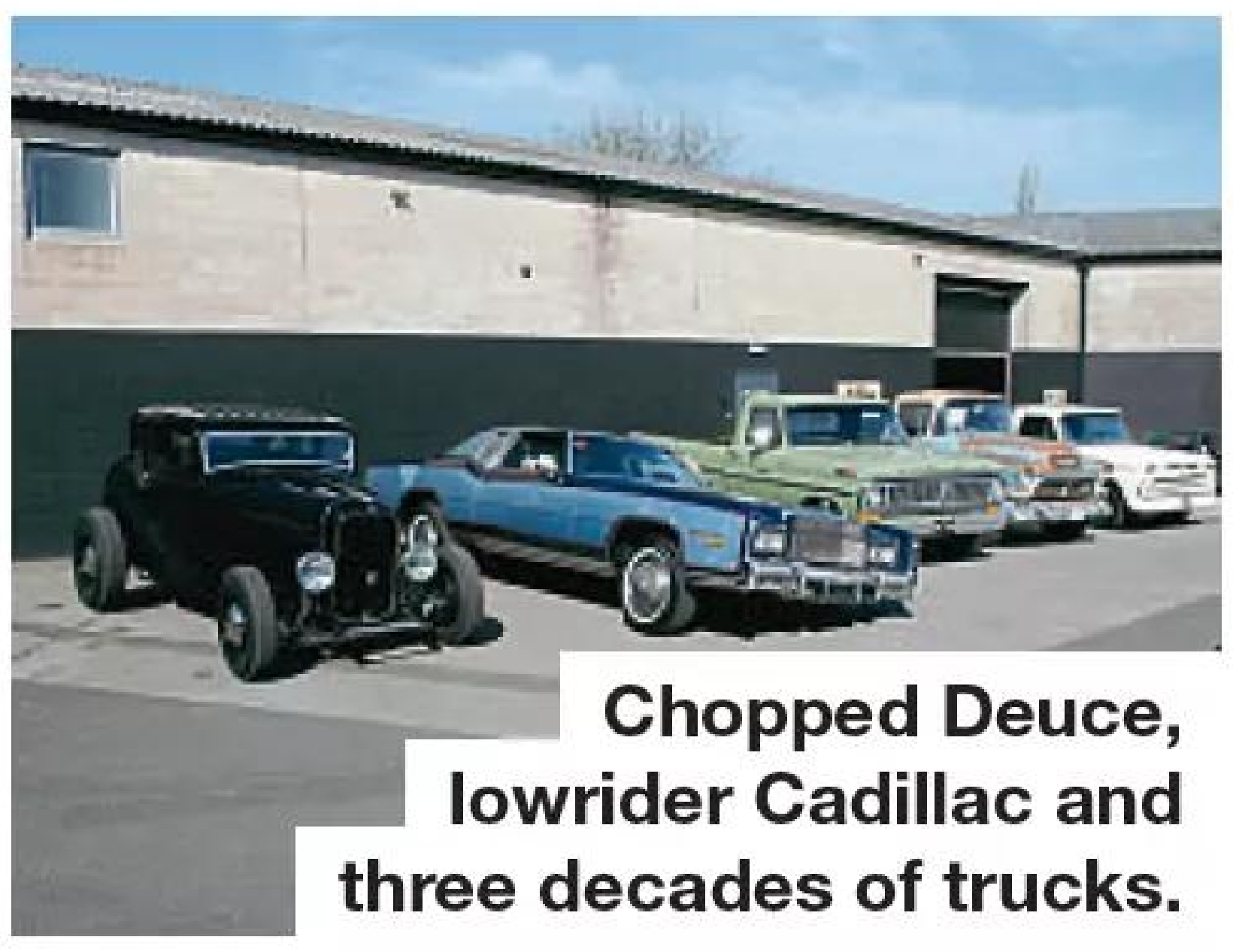
April 27, 2025

COFFEE & MOTORS WITH McEWAN'S CUSTOMS

Words and photography: Mike Renaut



Chopped Deuce, lowrider Cadillac and three decades of trucks.

Flathead-powered '32 Ford.

Hemi-powered 1965 Dodge Coronet.

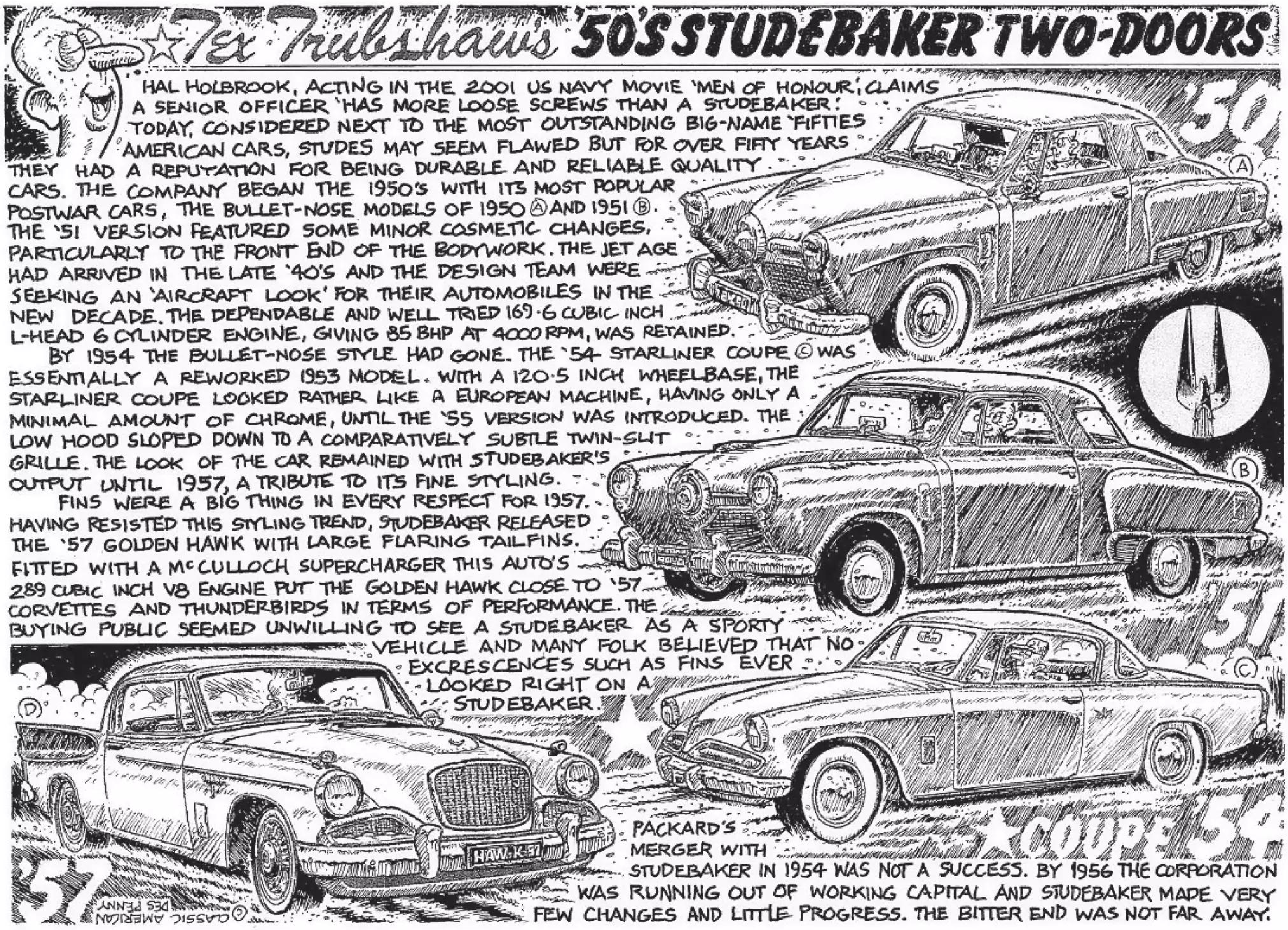
Mustangs and Saleen got lots of attention.

McEwan's are equally at home with cars or bikes.

With McEwan's Customs being a classic car and bike restoration/custom fabrication shop, this was bound to be a show to attract a variety of cars and motorcycles. While one side of the grounds saw European classics such as 1980s BMWs, Volkswagens and hot hatch Fords, the other was dedicated to American machinery. Several of McEwan's customer projects were on display including various pick-ups, a pair of top-quality hot rods and a 1977 Cadillac Eldorado they'd recently fitted with lowrider hydraulic suspension.

A trio of late-model Mustangs arrived, accompanied by a 1965 Dodge Coronet with a Stage V Engineering Hemi, while numerous classic bike and custom chopper riders also dropped in for refreshments from the on-site tea and coffee bar run by Five Yard Coffee. In all, a very friendly morning with families enjoying a relaxed day in the sunshine.

See www.mcewanscustoms.co.uk and www.fiveyardcoffee.com for details of the next event.



★ Tex Trubshaw's '50'S STUDEBAKER TWO-DOORS

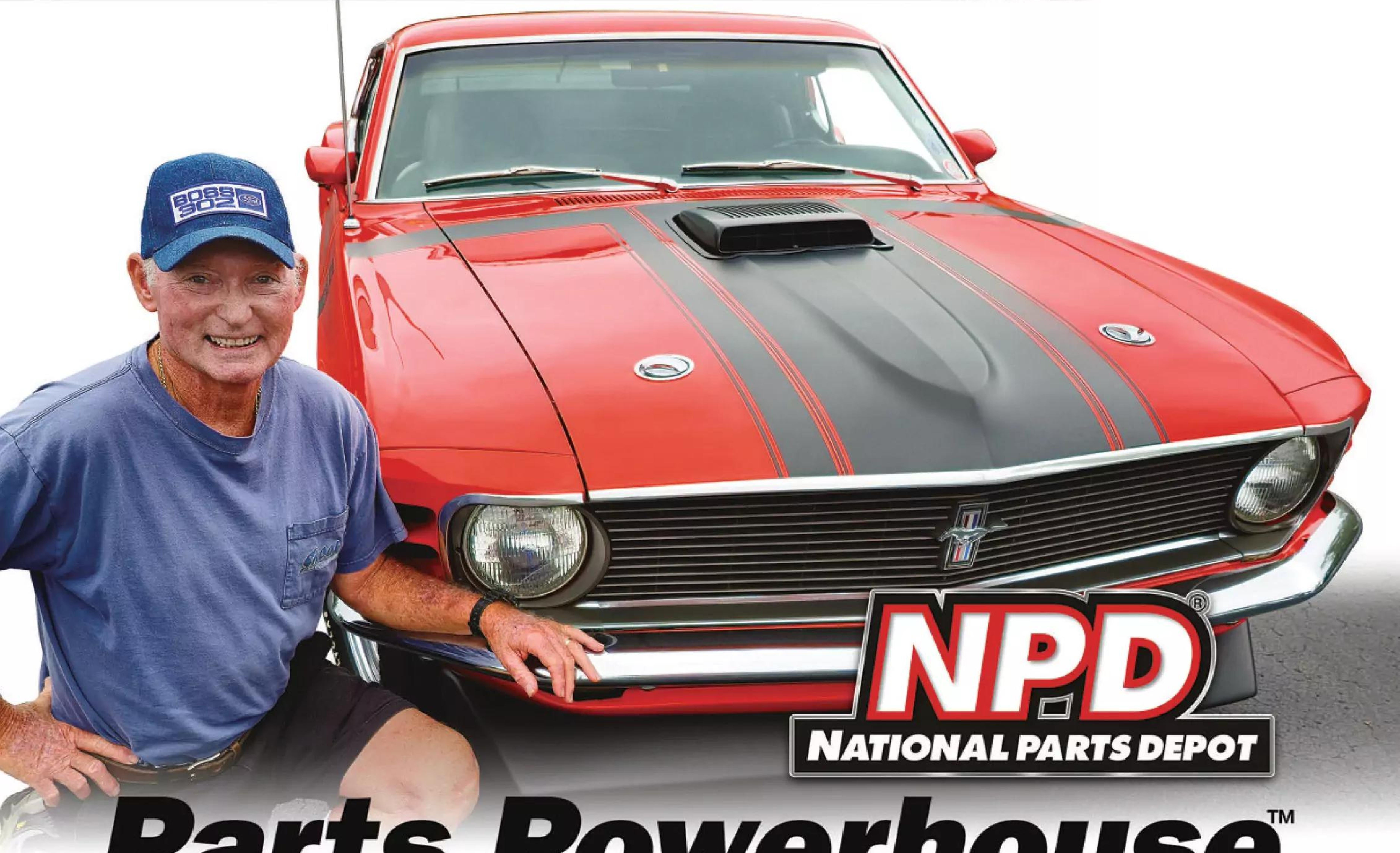
HAL HOLBROOK, ACTING IN THE 2001 US NAVY MOVIE 'MEN OF HONOUR', CLAIMS A SENIOR OFFICER 'HAS MORE LOOSE SCREWS THAN A STUDEBAKER'. TODAY, CONSIDERED NEXT TO THE MOST OUTSTANDING BIG-NAME 'FIFTIES AMERICAN CARS, STUDES MAY SEEM FLAWED BUT FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS THEY HAD A REPUTATION FOR BEING DURABLE AND RELIABLE QUALITY CARS. THE COMPANY BEGAN THE 1950'S WITH ITS MOST POPULAR POSTWAR CARS, THE BULLET-NOSE MODELS OF 1950 Ⓐ AND 1951 Ⓑ. THE '51 VERSION FEATURED SOME MINOR COSMETIC CHANGES, PARTICULARLY TO THE FRONT END OF THE BODYWORK. THE JET AGE HAD ARRIVED IN THE LATE '40'S AND THE DESIGN TEAM WERE SEEKING AN 'AIRCRAFT LOOK' FOR THEIR AUTOMOBILES IN THE NEW DECADE. THE DEPENDABLE AND WELL TRIED 169·6 CUBIC INCH L-HEAD 6 CYLINDER ENGINE, GIVING 85 BHP AT 4000 RPM, WAS RETAINED.

BY 1954 THE BULLET-NOSE STYLE HAD GONE. THE '54 STARLINER COUPE Ⓒ WAS ESSENTIALLY A REWORKED 1953 MODEL. WITH A 120·5 INCH WHEELBASE, THE STARLINER COUPE LOOKED RATHER LIKE A EUROPEAN MACHINE, HAVING ONLY A MINIMAL AMOUNT OF CHROME, UNTIL THE '55 VERSION WAS INTRODUCED. THE LOW HOOD SLOPED DOWN TO A COMPARATIVELY SUBTLE TWIN-SLIT GRILLE. THE LOOK OF THE CAR REMAINED WITH STUDEBAKER'S OUTPUT UNTIL 1957, A TRIBUTE TO ITS FINE STYLING.

FINS WERE A BIG THING IN EVERY RESPECT FOR 1957. HAVING RESISTED THIS STYLING TREND, STUDEBAKER RELEASED THE '57 GOLDEN HAWK WITH LARGE FLARING TAILFINS. FITTED WITH A McCULLOCH SUPERCHARGER THIS AUTO'S 289 CUBIC INCH V8 ENGINE PUT THE GOLDEN HAWK CLOSE TO '57 CORVETTES AND THUNDERBIRDS IN TERMS OF PERFORMANCE. THE BUYING PUBLIC SEEMED UNWILLING TO SEE A STUDEBAKER AS A SPORTY VEHICLE AND MANY FOLK BELIEVED THAT NO EXCRESCENCES SUCH AS FINS EVER LOOKED RIGHT ON A STUDEBAKER.

PACKARD'S MERGER WITH STUDEBAKER IN 1954 WAS NOT A SUCCESS. BY 1956 THE CORPORATION WAS RUNNING OUT OF WORKING CAPITAL AND STUDEBAKER MADE VERY FEW CHANGES AND LITTLE PROGRESS. THE BITTER END WAS NOT FAR AWAY.

"I have been buying parts from National Parts Depot since the early '80s for this Boss and other Mustangs. I've always been able to count on NPD!" - David S.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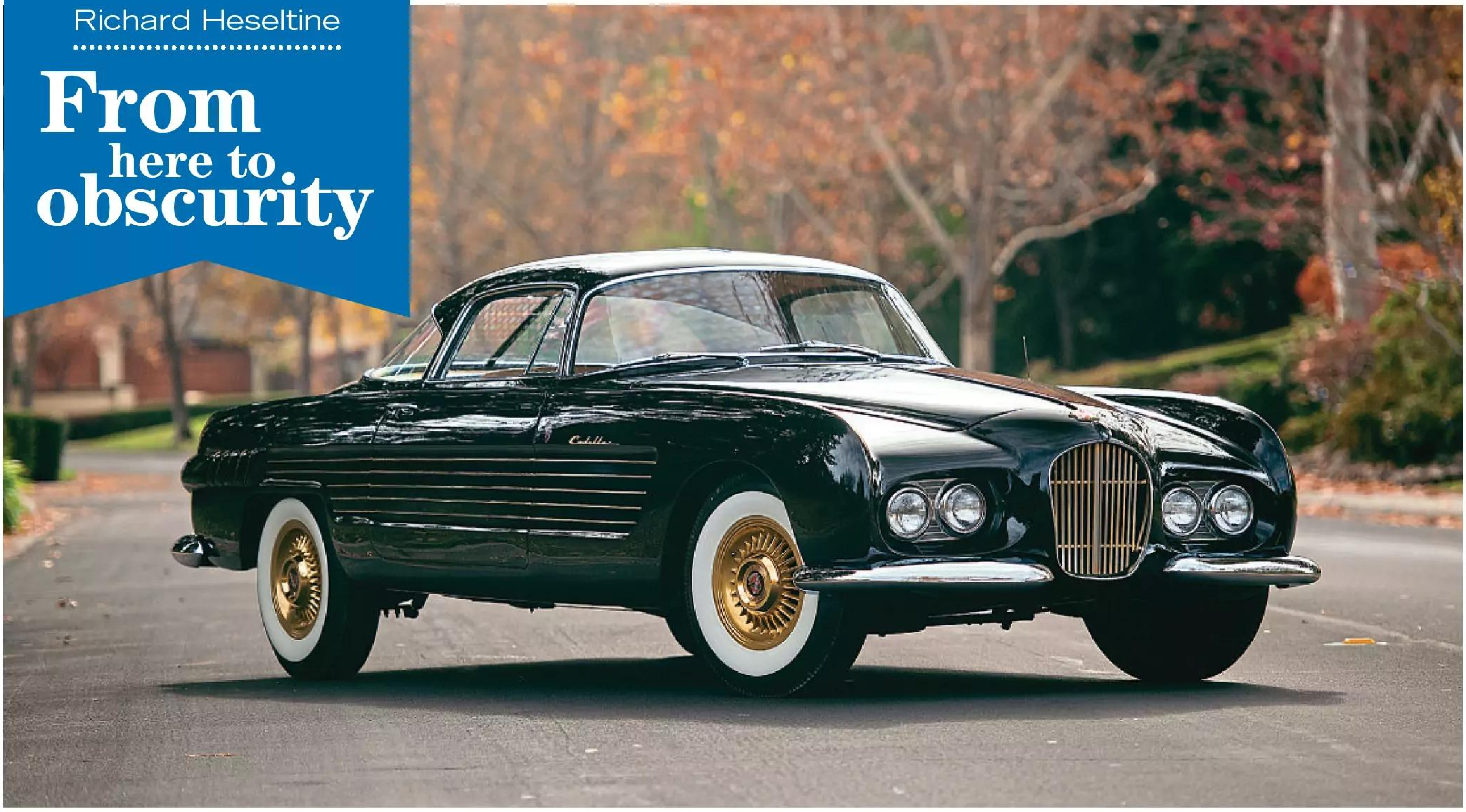
Richard Heseltine

From here to obscurity



1953 Ghia-designed Cadillac

Richard Heseltine unveils another fabulous machine from the great American auto archives, a Cadillac whose twin was fit for Hollywood's 'love goddess'.

It was a car fit for royalty. Legend has it, and may have it apocryphally, that the sister car to this coachbuilt confection was once gifted to Rita Hayworth. This was at a time when she was a real-life princess and the unanointed queen of Hollywood. However, the precise backstory behind the rakish coupe pictured here is shrouded in mystery.

What is known for definite is that it began life in 1953 as a Cadillac Series 62 convertible, or rather its chassis; one that was ordered via a distributor in New York and shipped to Turin to be dressed by Carrozzeria Ghia. Scroll back to the immediate postwar years and this coachbuilder, like so many others, lay in ruins.

Rebuilding its bomb-ravaged factory, not to mention its order book, was no easy feat but the arrival of Luigi 'Gigi' Segre as sales manager in 1947 sped up the process. And how. He made an instant impression, delivering new clients at a dizzying rate to the point that he was soon made a partner in the business. During this phase, there was considerable co-operation between American and Italian car manufacturers via the Marshall Plan. This was the making of Ghia.

Segre forged a close working relationship with Chrysler vice-president, C B Thomas, who handled the Detroit giant's export sales. In 1950, Ghia received a Plymouth chassis, the idea being that the Turin styling house would use it as a calling card.

Chrysler was keen to learn more about the 'Italian Line' and the methodology of how they went about creating one-offs. Concept cars were still relatively new, and Chrysler was eager to be at the vanguard of the movement. It was keen to quash its dowdy image and impress on the world that it was a forward-looking manufacturer with a keen eye on design.

Within only a few years, Ghia became Chrysler's go-to builder of show cars. It also forged a close relationship with GM, not least via its Cadillac division. Ghia built one-offs for dignitaries and small-series runs of limousines. The car pictured here and its twin were not factory-sanctioned, though. According to legend, one was apparently delivered to John Perona, the owner of Manhattan's well-known nightclub, El Morocco, and a longtime Ghia customer.

However, another persistent rumour is that the first car made was owned by Hayworth, one of the biggest names in the golden age of Hollywood. In reality, it was built on spec and displayed on the Ghia stand at the 1953 Paris Motor Show. It was spotted by Prince Aly Khan who bought the car on the spot.

He was married to Hayworth at the time and the story goes that the car was shipped to Nevada where she was staying, having separated from her husband due to his infidelity. However, there is no proof that she ever so much as sat in the car.

The Cadillac offered here, chassis number 536253053, differs in detail, most obviously the grille which here features gold-anodised elements. Also, it features 'bumper-ettes' up front rather than a full-width bumper.

Its history is similarly mired in conjecture, not least that it may have been the Perona car, but that didn't stop someone from stumping up $1,430,000 for the privilege of owning it back in 2016. ★

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Huw Evans

Across the pond

IROC 'N ROLL CAMARO.
TODAY'S CHEVROLET
IROC-Z

These days a mint 1989 Camaro wouldn't give much change, if any, from $50k.

Change is inevitable

Evans looks at the shifting classic car market and what might happen next.

As humans, many of us don't like change, yet it is the one constant in our lives. As far as classic cars are concerned, the hobby continues to evolve, with new trends, new buyers and new ways to enjoy and appreciate our vehicles.

One of the biggest changes we've seen over the last few years is the sharp increase in interest and demand for 1980s and 1990s vehicles, which is now even starting to spill over into cars and trucks made during the 2000s.

A friend of mine, who hosts an annual show celebrating cars and trucks from this era, says that while it took a long time for these kinds of vehicles to be truly appreciated as classics, they are now fast becoming recognised as such, and this is reflected in the prices we see.

Let's look at some staple American iron from this era, such as the 1987-93 Ford Mustang 5.0L and the 1985-90 Chevrolet Camaro IROC-Z.

About 25 years ago, when I first moved across the pond, these cars were approaching the bottoming-out phase when it came to value. A lot of them had been used and abused by that point, but the benefit was that if you wanted one, you could still buy something decent for $5000. An added bonus was that wrecking yards still had plenty of these cars and it was easy to grab your toolbox and head down to one on a Saturday afternoon, pull off what you needed, clean it up and install it on your car.

Today things are very different. Good Mustangs and IROCs from this era now cost anywhere from $15,000 to $30,000 depending on mileage and condition, some even tipping the scales at 40 or even 50k, such as mint, low-mileage 1988-90 1LE Camaros, or the 1993 Mustang SVT Cobra.

Turbo Buick Regals from the 1980s are another example. In fact, these cars (which were never that cheap to begin with), now frequently command a premium.

I was looking at online listings recently and found a 1986 Grand National with 14,000 miles from new listed for $77,000! Back when this car was new, it stickered just north of $16,000. In today's money that's about $47,000, so it's clear to see that these cars are currently very hot as far as the market goes. As for the limited production GNX, these tend to go for anywhere between $100,000-$200,000, with sales in the last year tending to hover around $130,000 to $160,000.

Even more mainstream cars from this era are now commanding premium prices. The very first American car I bought was a 1987 Chevy Caprice base model four-door. Today, good ones command around $15,000 or more, so times have definitely changed!

What will happen next? Well, logic would dictate that cars from the 2000s (which are already attracting interest) will be next and then from the 2010s and so on. Yet I can't help but think that during the 21st century a notable shift began taking place, particularly around 2010. Since that time, new vehicles have become increasingly homogenised, with more focus on connectivity features than performance and style and a growing number of crossover utilities, to the point that today these soft roaders now encompass the single largest market segment.

So, what does that mean for desirability for so-called 'future classics'? At this point it's difficult to tell. Sure, cars like Mustangs, Camaros, Corvettes and the Dodge Charger and Challenger are likely to attract solid interest from enthusiasts, especially those that didn't have the ability to acquire one when new or slightly used. Yet it could be argued that because the types of vehicles available have changed a lot in the last 20 years, the enthusiast focus at least in the short and medium term could be somewhat narrow.

I think part of the issue is that environmental and safety regulations and focus groups and the enormous cost required to develop vehicles (much of it due to those regulations) has made automakers cautious and not willing to break the mould.

Yet, like anything else, trends change, and I for one feel that while automotive excitement has been muted, it certainly isn't forgotten. Furthermore, given that among Generation Z and Alpha, more of them are looking to traditional technical skills and crafting when it comes to both work and pastime pursuits – reversing a decades long trend – there is a chance that we could see a resurgence in car culture, providing the opportunity to introduce new automotive legends as well as reimagining old ones. ★

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NIGEL SMITH

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Fifty years not out!

Dear *Classic American*
Fifty years! Bit of an achievement methinks! This Wheels Day was a bit grey and overcast but this didn't stop the wheels and public from enjoying the day. The bolstered attendance has helped the club recover from last year's dreadful weather and we will be giving away funds raised during the coming months so look out announcements! The club would like to thank all the helpers, sponsors and you for your continued support, see you at Wheels Day 51!

Graham Smith
Surrey Street Rodders
Via email

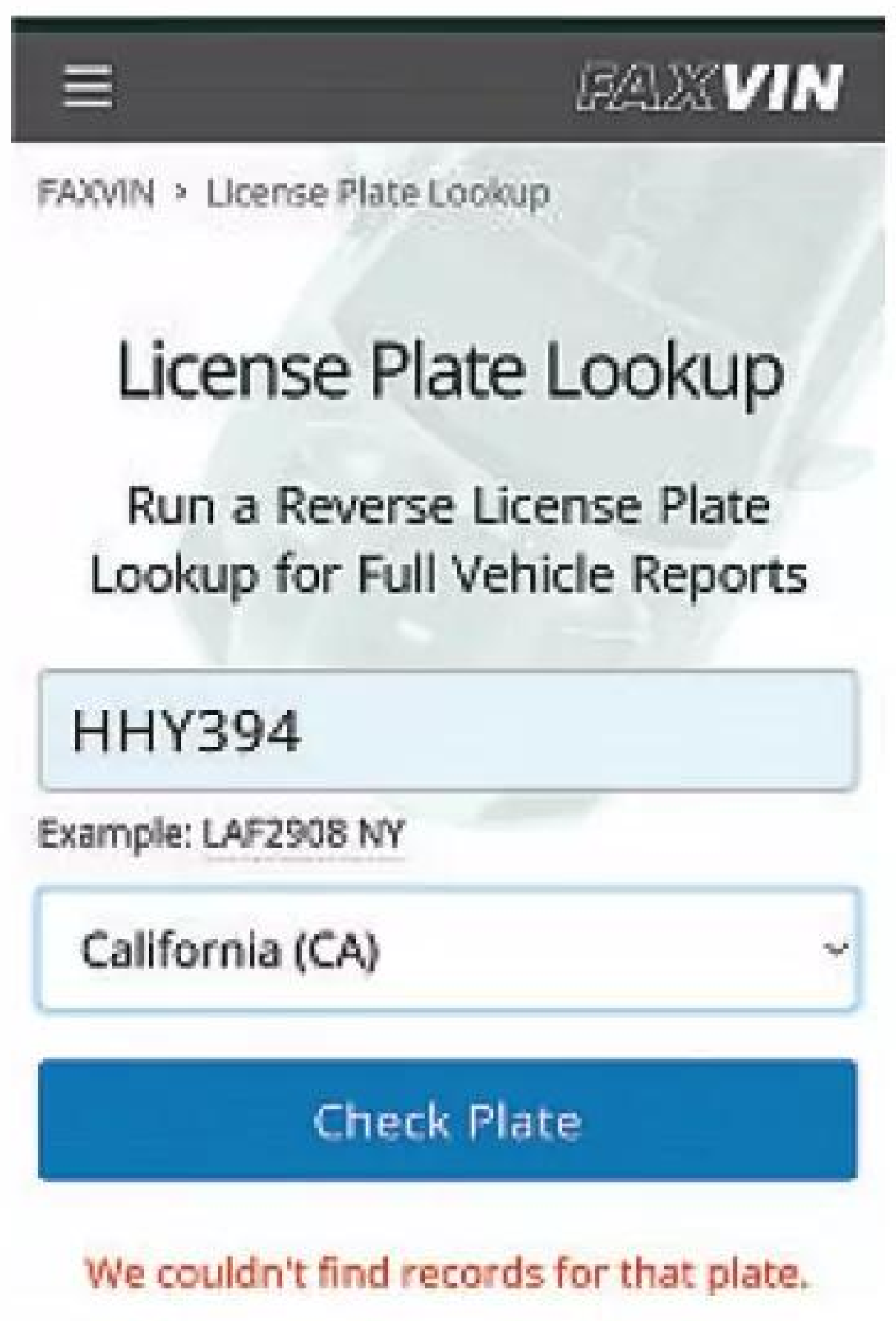
And what a great event it was! Roll on the next 50 years, thank you for allowing Classic American to be part of your magnificent event and great to see it settled into its new home at Newbury Showground, complete with excellent drainage, handy motorway links and capacity to expand!

Black plate mystery

Dear *Classic American*
I read your magazine almost every issue and I love it. Yesterday I saw a 1964 Cadillac Sedan de Ville at Gretna Services on the A74(M). Photo attached. I'm kinda obsessed with big engines and so I entered the registration mark into the DVLA enquiry page to find out what size of engine this beautiful car has. I became confused because the DVLA said that they have no record of HHY 394.

My next thought was: "Are those 'California' plates real California plates?!", so I checked to see if HHY 394 was an actual California registered car but that came back negative as well. So where is this car from, that it has 'California' licence plates with a registration mark which isn't registered in California and isn't registered in the UK. If it's from a European country, it certainly didn't have an international oval country ID sticker anywhere on it.

Condition of this beauty? The whole car looked like it had seen careful use but looked factory original. Doubtless it had been restored at some point in the last 61 years but not in an obvious way. It was retrofitted with a CD player but tastefully hidden out of sight. I only know because there was a stack of rock 'n' roll CDs in the centre console. Still don't know what size of engine it has though and the owner kept going back inside the building after each cigarette so we had to give up waiting and leave! I found a Wikipedia page which, after some searching around, states that the 1964 Sedan de Ville was powered by either a 390cu in OHV V8 or 429cu in OHV V8. Nice. Just sad I couldn't wait long enough to hear it drive off.



FAXVIN › License Plate Lookup

License Plate Lookup

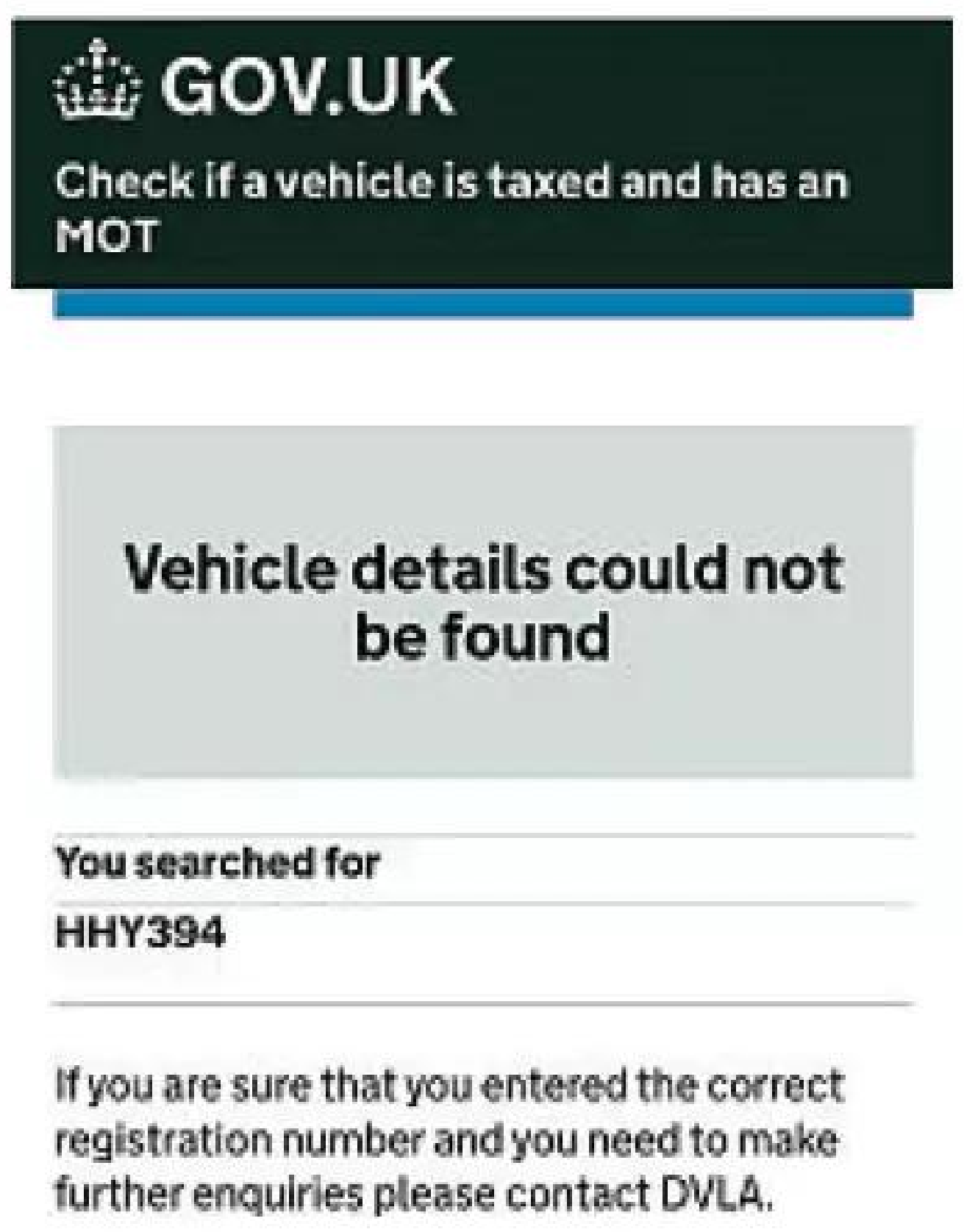
Run a Reverse License Plate Lookup for Full Vehicle Reports

HHY394

Example: LAF2908 NY

California (CA)

We couldn't find records for that plate.



Check if a vehicle is taxed and has an MOT

Vehicle details could not be found

You searched for
HHY394

If you are sure that you entered the correct registration number and you need to make further enquiries please contact DVLA.

Judson Simzer
Via email

Hello Judson, we love an automotive mystery here at Classic American and I can confirm that those look to be genuine California 'black plate' plates… So, that would suggest the car has been recently imported into the UK, still wearing its Cali plates, and hasn't been registered in the UK yet. It is legal (apparently) to drive your newly imported car from the docks on US plates, if the car is insured using its VIN number to an MoT station, we believe.

California licence plates used to be black between the years of 1963 and 1969 and they're often found still in use on cars that have been in the same ownership/family since then, so are sought after, as they represent that 'one owner' status considered so desirable when purchasing a classic car. If the car has been off the road, in storage or is a barn find, the DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) in California will have no record of it after a certain period of time…

Subs risk

Dear *Classic American,*
You make a very valid point in your viewpoint of petrol cars having to be rationed because of government interference, I call it bully boy tactics personally. You then ask if we would like to see more on EV stuff? I would thus like to point you to the magazine's cover which says: *Classic American*, hence I have not bothered to read your resto-mod or electric Ford F150 stuff in recent issues as it's not classic! You run the risk of pushing readers who don't want non-classic stuff served up, including the above-named EV stuff, into cancelling and giving up their subscription.

Chris Drucker
Staines
Middlesex

You too make a valid point Chris re. the cars we feature, however such an orthodoxy would mean that we would never have shared Peter Cornwell's magnificent 1941 Cadillac back in the September 2022 issue of Classic American (CA377). Its drive train is a 350cu in small-block V8 coupled to a 700 R4 auto transmission and as such is classed as 'resto-mod'… and wouldn't that have been a shame not to feature it?!

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Classic American Mail

LOVE THE 80S!

Keith's latest 80s acquisition is this Town Car.

Keith's other 80s car was this stunning Cadillac Fleetwood.

Dear *Classic American*,
I just wanted to thank you for featuring 1980s cars in the magazine as a more regular occurrence – with particular mention to the Back to the 80s feature in the April edition. I love all American cars, but the ones that have always 'floated my boat' are the late Seventies and early Eighties land yachts – big, boxy and beautiful in my eyes! Whether it's a Cadillac Fleetwood, Ford LTD or even a battered yellow NYC Chevy Caprice taxi, I just love that Eighties-era shape with the aerodynamics of a brick.

Having spent years missing my old 80s Fleetwood, I recently quenched my rear-wheel-drive, V8 thirst by picking up this '84 Lincoln Town Car and I already know it's a keeper for life. At only 140bhp I won't be racing anyone away from the lights in it, but as you know these things were built for comfort, not speed, and it just floats down the road. I remember years ago when Eighties cars in general weren't even considered 'classics' so I for one am so pleased to see them getting more airtime and recognition – with many models being the last of the full-sized, old-school, rear-wheel-drive cars before everything got a bit more sensible (and less boxy!).

Perhaps my age explains my affinity with this era of American cars, as I was an Eighties child and couldn't get enough of these cars in the American TV shows and movies at the time. And when I first visited the US as a 10-year-old I can still remember the feeling of my jaw hitting the ground seeing these Eighties boxy beauties in the flesh for the first time. It is encouraging to know that they clearly have many admirers (possibly in my age group for the most part!) and please do keep giving them the attention they deserve.

Keith Moir
Via email

Believe it or not Keith, some of the early-Eighties cars are now getting on for 45+ years old… If that isn't a classic, we don't know what is! And as you say, many of the cars American manufacturers were producing at that time had more in common with cars from the Fifties and Sixties than what was to come later…

Buick research tips

Dear *Classic American*,
Here is a bit of a titbit of information to share if you like with your readers – you don't need to give me any credit for it. I've discovered that there is a service like a Marti report for Ford, but for Buick and I recently got my Buick decoded; it told me the invoice date, invoice amount and the dealer who bought it, plus all the VIN options (which I knew anyway). It's not cheap, but you're basically paying for a researcher to go look through masses of microfilm. I got put on to a museum called Sloan Longway, which has the Buick factory production records for 1970 and 1972-1976. This information comes from microfilm records donated by Buick Motor Division.

https://sloanlongway.org/sloan/historical-collections/archives/

The Sloan Museum Archives house VIN records for only a select range of years:
1970s: all but 0H over 193552
1972-1976: All
VIN reports feature the same information as found on Buick Motor Division's invoice forms.
All reports list options, invoice amount, invoice date, colour, trim, key codes, order number, and dealer number.
A copy of the wholesale car order form is also included.
Using the wholesale car order form, you are able to 'decode' the options and accessories which came original to the vehicle as it was produced by the factory.

Andy's Buick GS almost completed.

Enclosed is my VIN decoded; you get the order form too which is cool – I thought this might just be a titbit for your readers' interest maybe.

Andy Bennett
Bacup
Lancashire

Got a Buick from that era that you want to do some research on? This could be the ticket, thanks Andy! We're looking forward to featuring Andy's 1970 Buick GS that he's spent the last year restoring with his mates at the Doomsday Garage in Bacup in an upcoming issue. Watch this space!

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CHEVELLE
19 GEORGIA 70
ANM 685H
BACK TO LIFE CARS
MICKEY THOMPSON
SPORTSMAN

When Chris Durham's 1970 Chevelle Malibu arrived it wasn't quite as nice as he'd hoped, but that was a great excuse to tear it apart and build the car of his dreams, as Mike Renaut discovered...

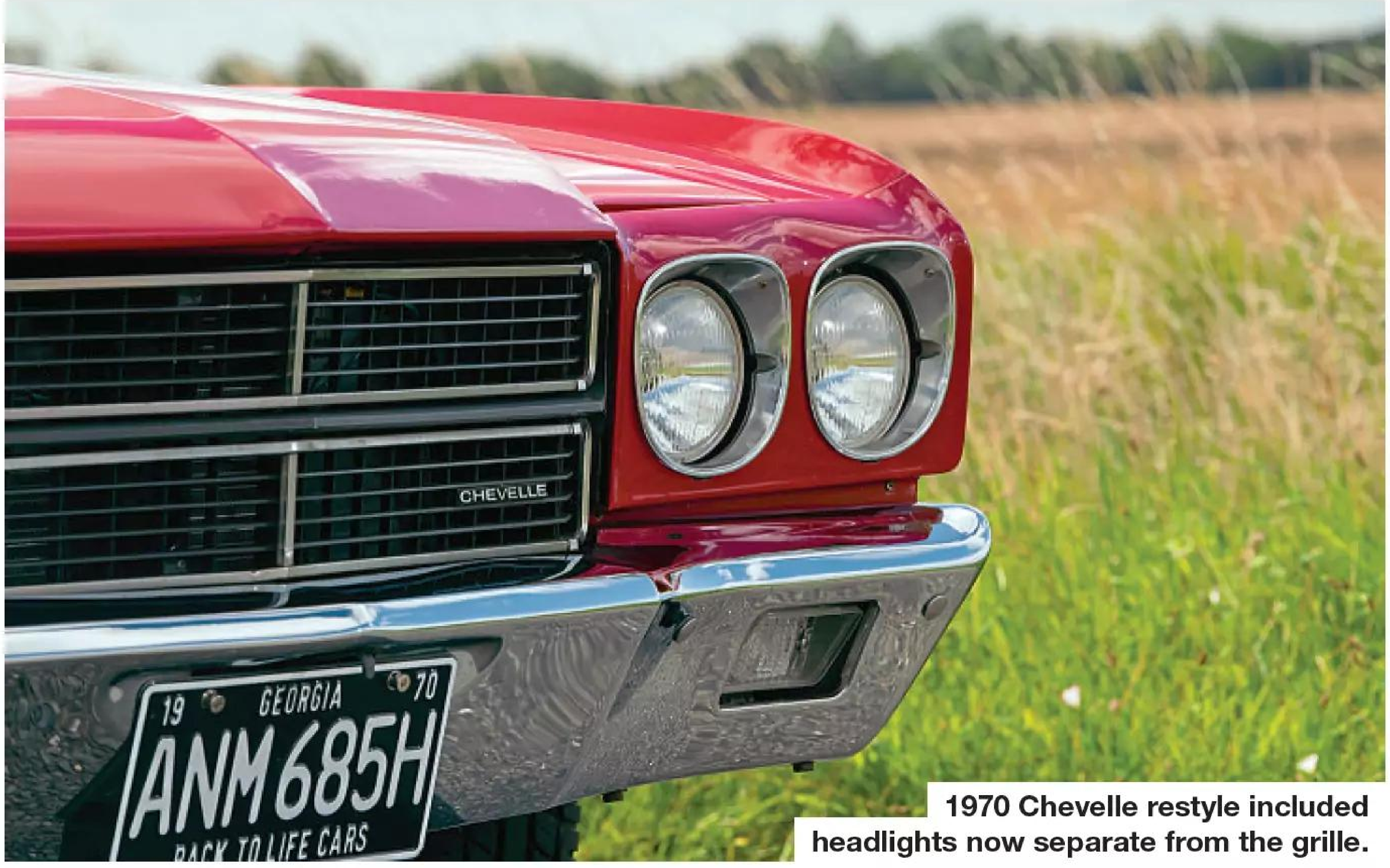
Words: Mike Renaut **Photography:** Matt Richardson

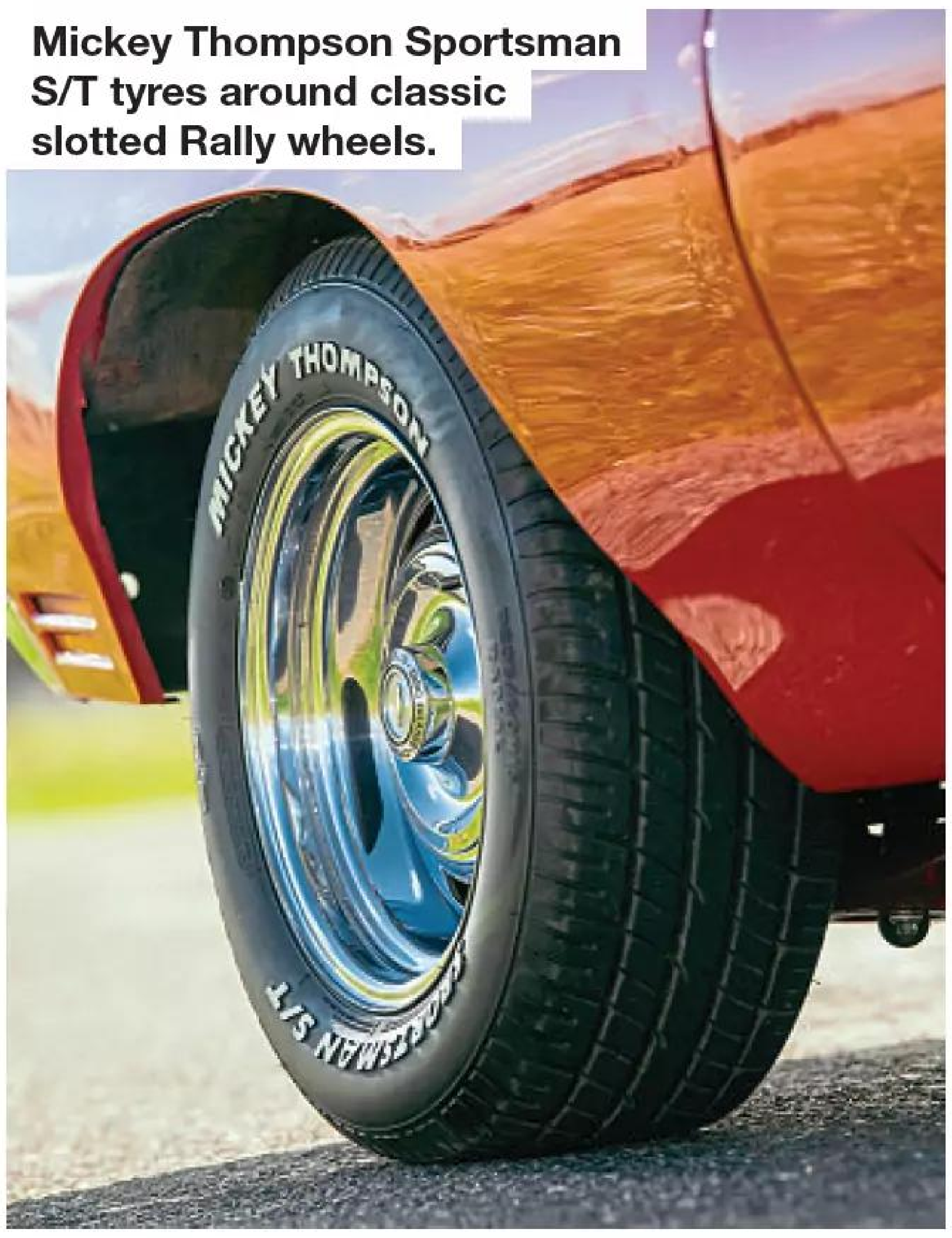
While muscle cars are lovely to look at, the real enjoyment comes from driving them. Sadly, the UK's poor roads and heavy traffic can turn that pleasure into pain. Chris Durham, owner of this 1970 Chevrolet Chevelle, has the answer; upgrade the suspension, brakes and virtually every other mechanical part to bring the car up to modern standards, without ruining any of its classic appeal.

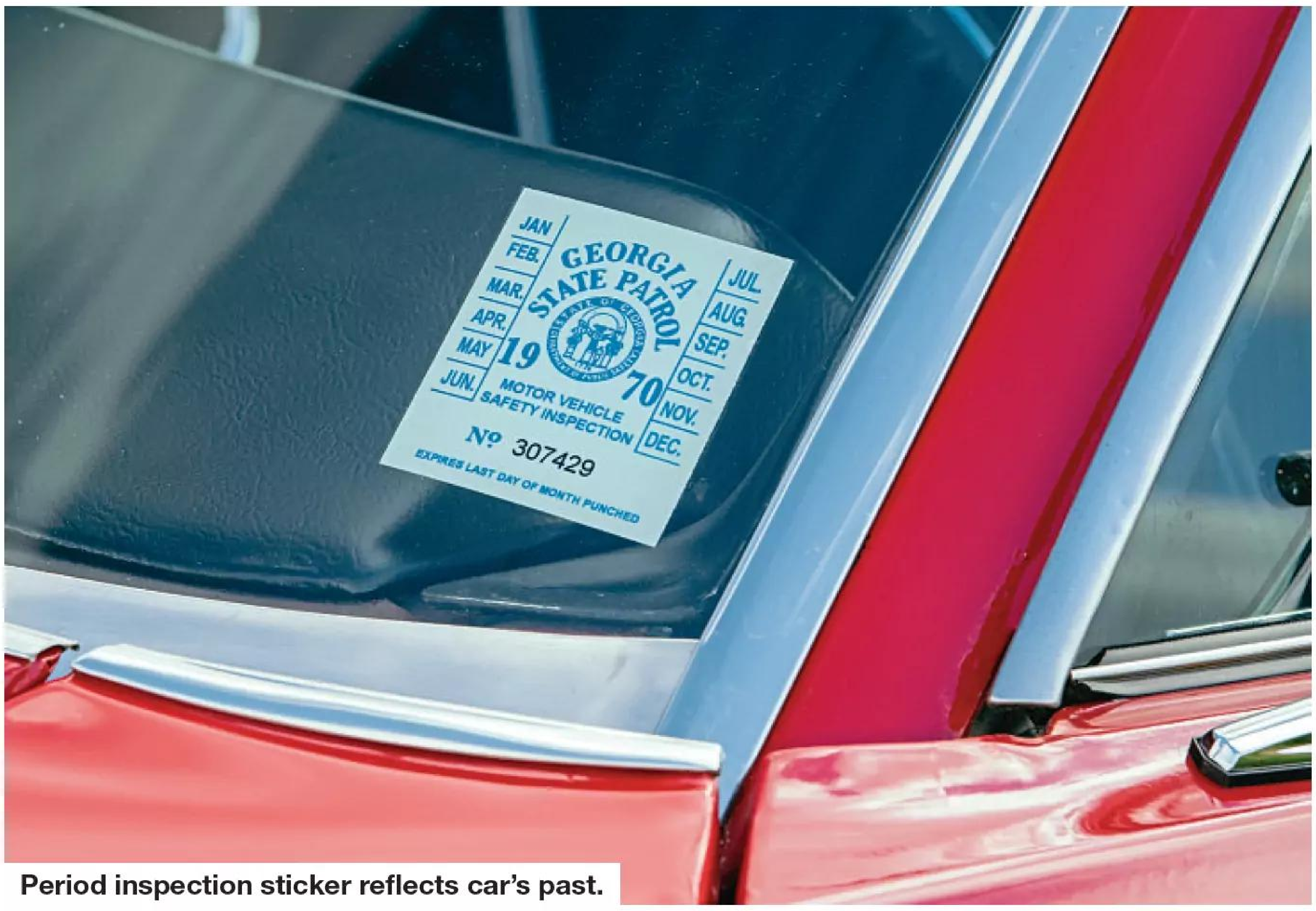
But let's start at the beginning: "I had a weekend job helping out at a garage where my uncle worked, at Andy Loizou's CPS Mustangs," says Chris. "I was always into cars, but at age 14 I couldn't see why someone would take an early Sixties Mustang and put time, effort and money into rebuilding it. I watched one being restored over a couple of years and when it was finished, they took me for a ride in it and suddenly it all made sense.

"My first American car was a 1966 Mustang when I was 22, but I soon realised I was a Chevy guy so bought a 1967 El Camino."

Chris enjoyed driving the El Camino and had no plans to change, until fate intervened.


CHEVELLE
19 GEORGIA 70
ANM 685H
BACK TO LIFE CARS
1970 Chevelle restyle included headlights now separate from the grille.


MICKEY THOMPSON
SPORTSMAN S/T
Mickey Thompson Sportsman S/T tyres around classic slotted Rally wheels.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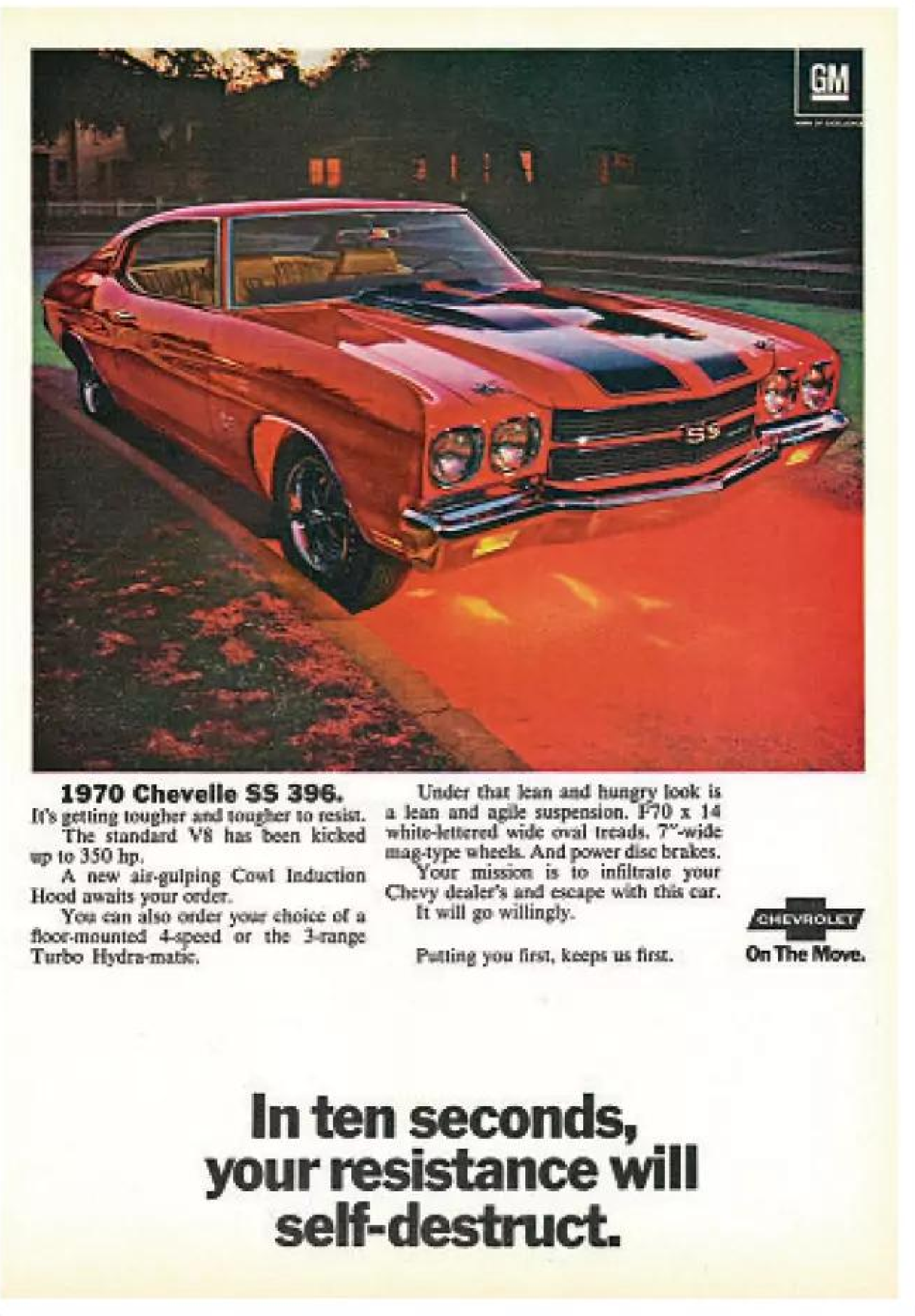
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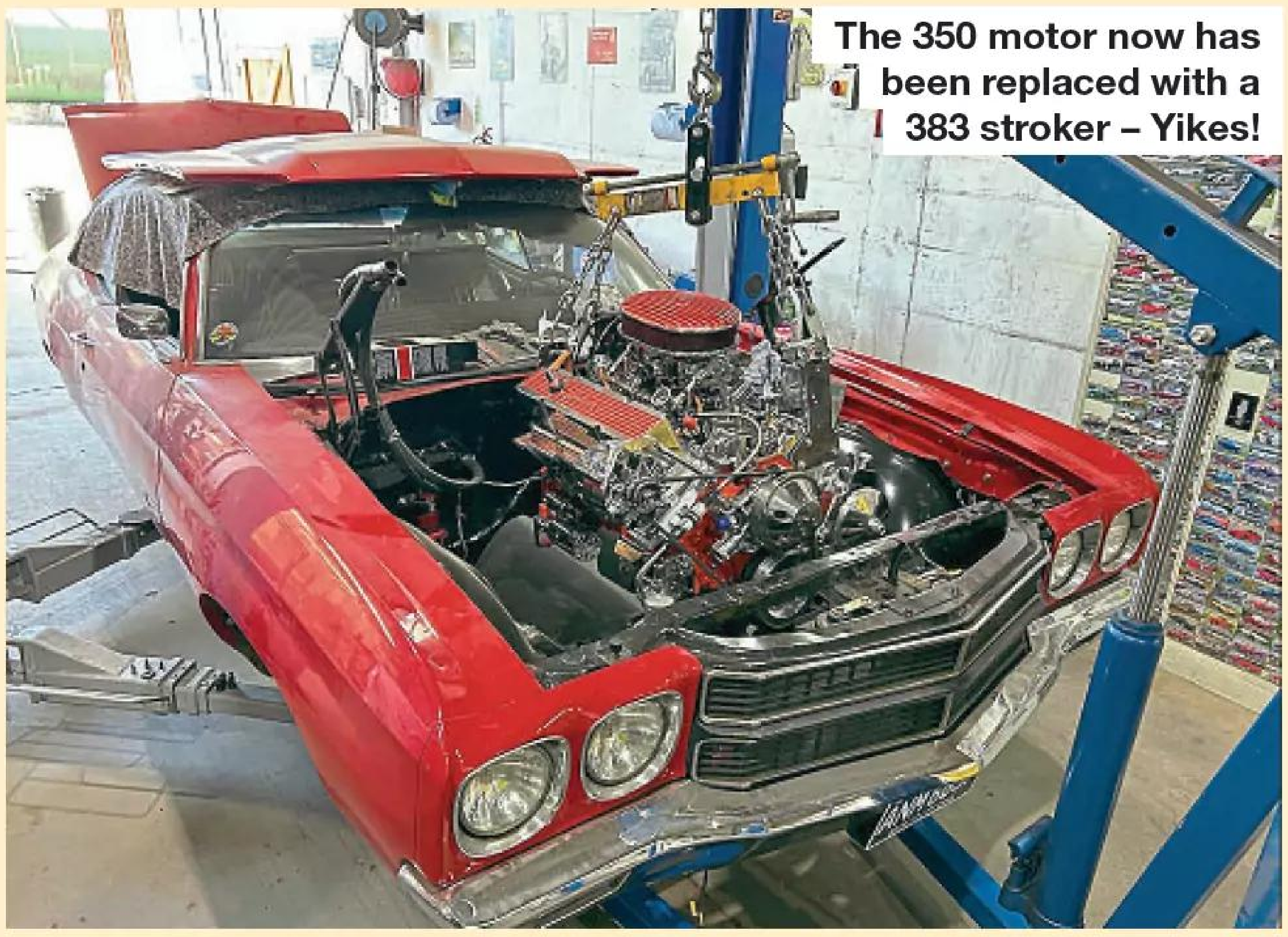
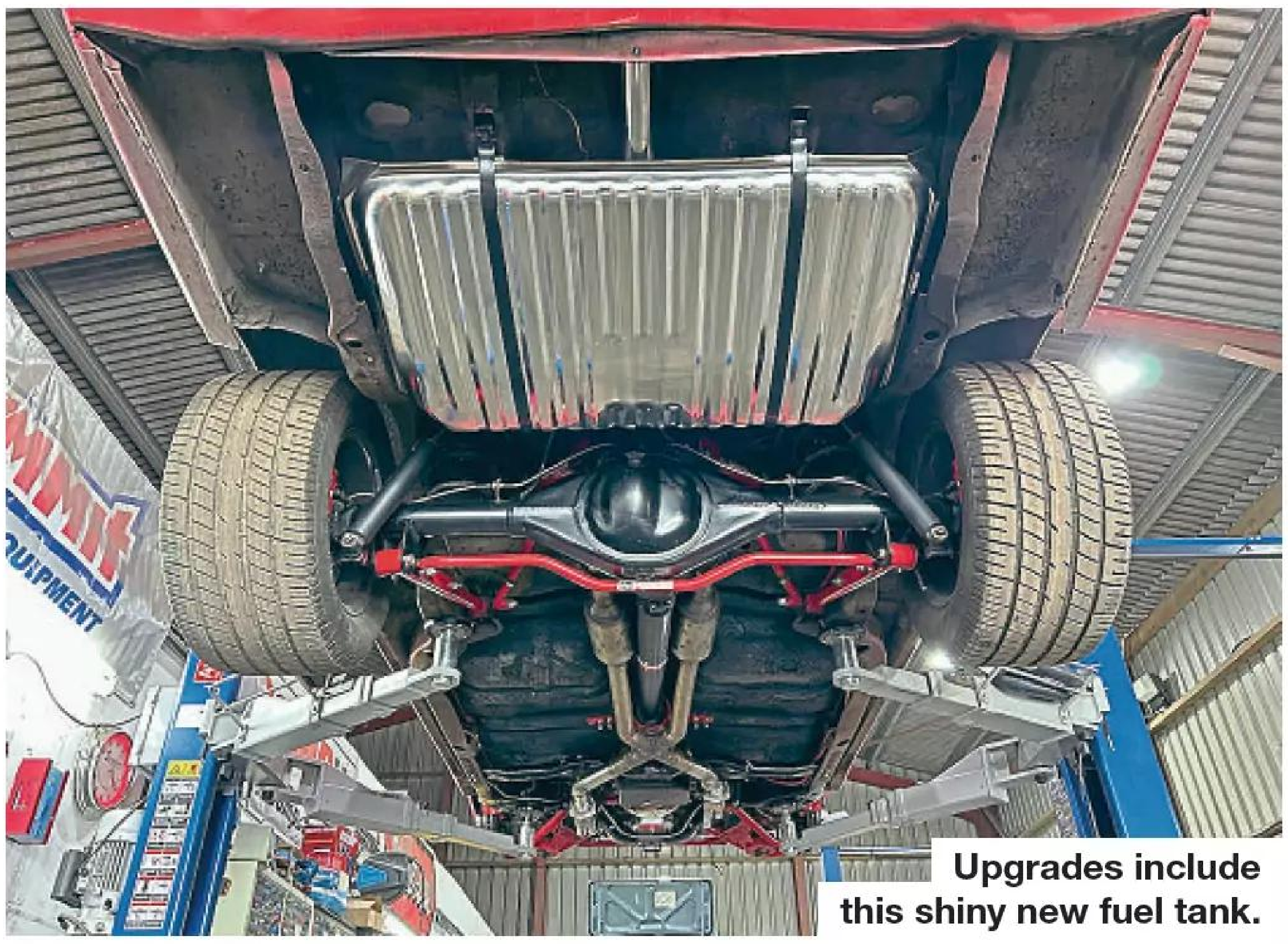
Semi fastback styling worked well on the mid-sized Chevelle.

Originally a 350 V8 sat in the engine bay.


The 350 motor now has been replaced with a 383 stroker – Yikes!

UMI Performance suspension front and rear.


Upgrades include this shiny new fuel tank.

Aftermarket Moon tach has 6000rpm redline.

Updated interior boasts extra gauges and new radio, note column shifter gearchange.

"Someone photographed it on my driveway and when the pic appeared on Facebook a guy asked if it was for sale. It wasn't, until my girlfriend Sally announced she was pregnant with twins, meaning a two-seater pick-up wasn't really practical. I sold it for a very good price then mentioned to Sally perhaps I could use the money to buy one of my dream cars; a 1970 'Cuda or a 1970 Chevelle. Sally replied: 'Of course – it's your money!' so I started looking online."

During that time Chris had a drive in a 'Cuda and decided he'd prefer a Chevelle: "There's nothing wrong with Mopars, but I was just more into Chevrolets.

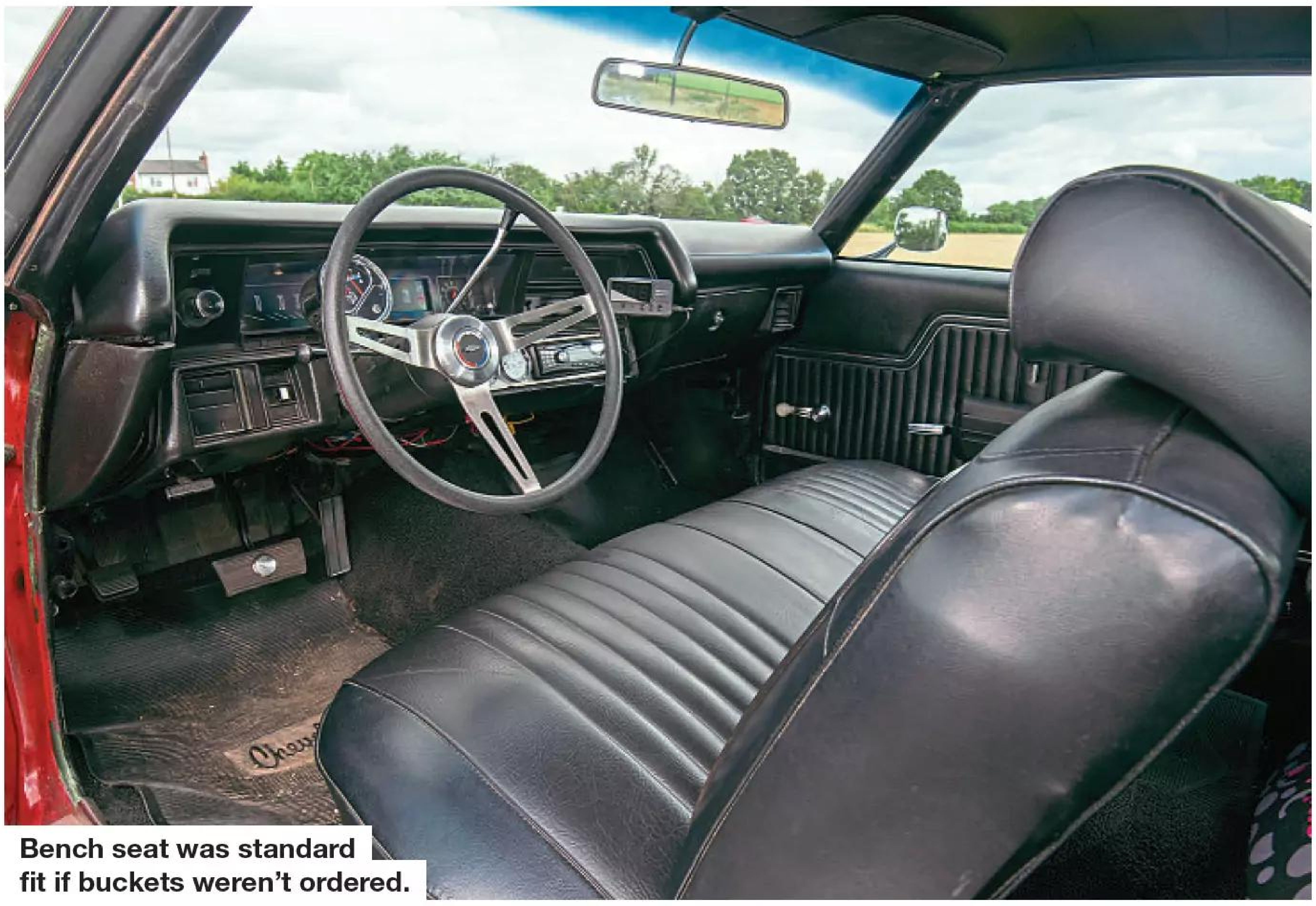
"It seemed like every film I watched featured a Chevelle; Jack Reacher, Fast & Furious and Jon Wick… In late 2018 I saw this Chevelle for sale online at AP Vintage Motors in Northern Carolina and had my friend Ron at STS Imports (www.stsimports.co.uk) bring it over for me."

The Chevelle was sold as fully restored, but, as is so often the case, one person's interpretation of that may not be another's.

"The Chevelle was okay," remembers Chris, "but a bit crusty in places and there were lots of little issues like the window winders not being attached and the power-steering pulley hitting the steering box."

By now Chris was running his own business, Back To Life Cars (https://backtolifecars.com/01702 870087). "We've got a fully equipped workshop for everything from an oil change to a complete restoration, which came in useful to get the Chevelle up to the standard I wanted it. After all, this was my dream, a car I was going to keep.

"I put it through an MoT where I always take our cars and they refused to pass it until the brakes ››


Bench seat was standard fit if buckets weren't ordered.

Chris is understandably proud of his Chevelle and the work he's put into it.

were sorted. An MoT was required to register the Chevelle, so I spent that weekend replacing the brake hoses, lines and other little jobs."

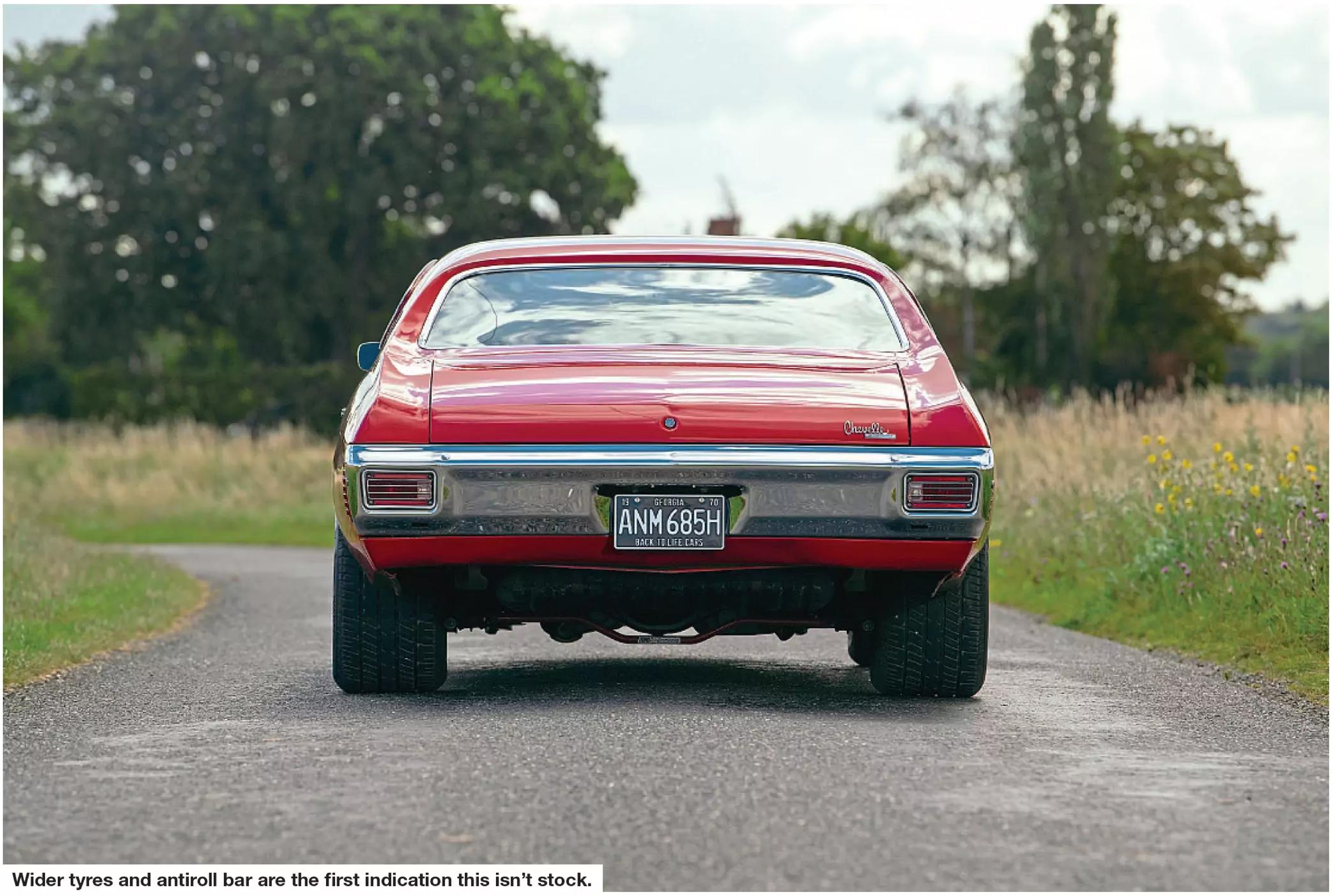
Green machine

The Chevelle left the assembly line in the second week of June 1970 as a Malibu Sport Coupe, "in triple green, including a green vinyl roof", laughs Chris. Equipped with power-steering and power-brakes, this example was built at the Atlanta, Georgia plant with a sequence number making it around the 55,000th Chevelle produced there.

It was Forest Green – one of 14 paint finishes available – with a 'metallic dark green coated fabric' interior, itself one of 27 colour options. "I know it spent some time in Georgia," adds Chris, "but I'm not really that interested in a car's history so, to be honest, I haven't bothered to find out more."

Chevrolet's Chevelle model was introduced in 1964 as competition to Ford's mid-sized 1963 Fairlane, slotting in between the compact Chevy II/Nova and the full-size Chevrolet cars. Available in 11 models across two lines, Chevelle 300 and Chevelle Malibu, the Chevelle was labelled a 'senior compact', boasting innovative curved side glass and was used to reintroduce the El Camino pick-up after its absence of four years. While the 1965 Chevelle was largely a front-end restyle, 1966 saw completely new bodylines, including the fashionable 'Coke bottle' silhouette. Another all-new body arrived in 1968, now including a fastback coupe with rakish B-pillars and, for one year only, the Super Sport became a separate series.

Following a facelift for 1969, including a revised front grille (now cast in plastic) and »



Wider tyres and antiroll bar are the first indication this isn't stock.

19 GEORGIA 70
ANM 685H
BACK TO LIFE CARS

By 1970 Chevelle was among the top selling Chevrolets, beating Nova and Camaro.

19 GEORGIA 70
ANM 685H
BACK TO LIFE CARS

Chevelle badge was discreetly tucked away on the grille.

no vent windows, the 1970 models received new grille and bonnet styling (with cowl induction on SS models), stand-alone headlights and a new rear bumper with integral reversing lights, along with redesigned interiors. Also notable were subtle blisters above the wheels. "We thought the sides should have more interesting detailing," said Chevrolet designer Dave Holls. "I was interested in European rally cars that started to not have wheel lips, but the surface around the wheel openings faired out."

The 1970 Chevelle Malibu also included Hide-A-Way concealed windscreen wipers, a radio aerial concealed in the front screen, dual master-cylinder brakes, a coil-spring suspension said to be computer selected according to model options and side-guard beam metal rails in the doors and bodywork for protection against side impact.

Malibu was available as a sport coupe like our feature car, a four-door pillarless sport sedan, a convertible and a pillared four-door sedan. Two-door cars rode a 112in wheelbase versus the sedan's 116. Standard V8 was a 200bhp Turbofire 307cu in, with an optional 250 cube straight six.

The 350 V8 was available with 250 or 300bhp, but you had to buy the performance super sport model – an option for the Malibu sport coupe and convertible – to get the 350bhp SS396 or 360bhp SS454 big block engines. Manual transmissions were four-speeds (three-speed for the six and 250bhp 350 engines) with optional three-speed Powerglide or Turbo Hydra-matic autos. Among many options were variable-ratio power steering said to 'quicken response as wheels are turned from the straight-ahead position', thus improving parking effort while not compromising feedback at highway speeds, a positraction limited slip differential and (new for 1970) power-door locks.

Paint it black

"When I bought it everything inside had been painted black over the original green," remembers Chris, "so I removed it all and, after repairing the rusty floorpans, installed a completely new super sport interior." The rest of the floor was taken back to bare metal and sound-deadening insulation installed. "It's also got a custom AutoSound bluetooth radio, with uprated speakers."

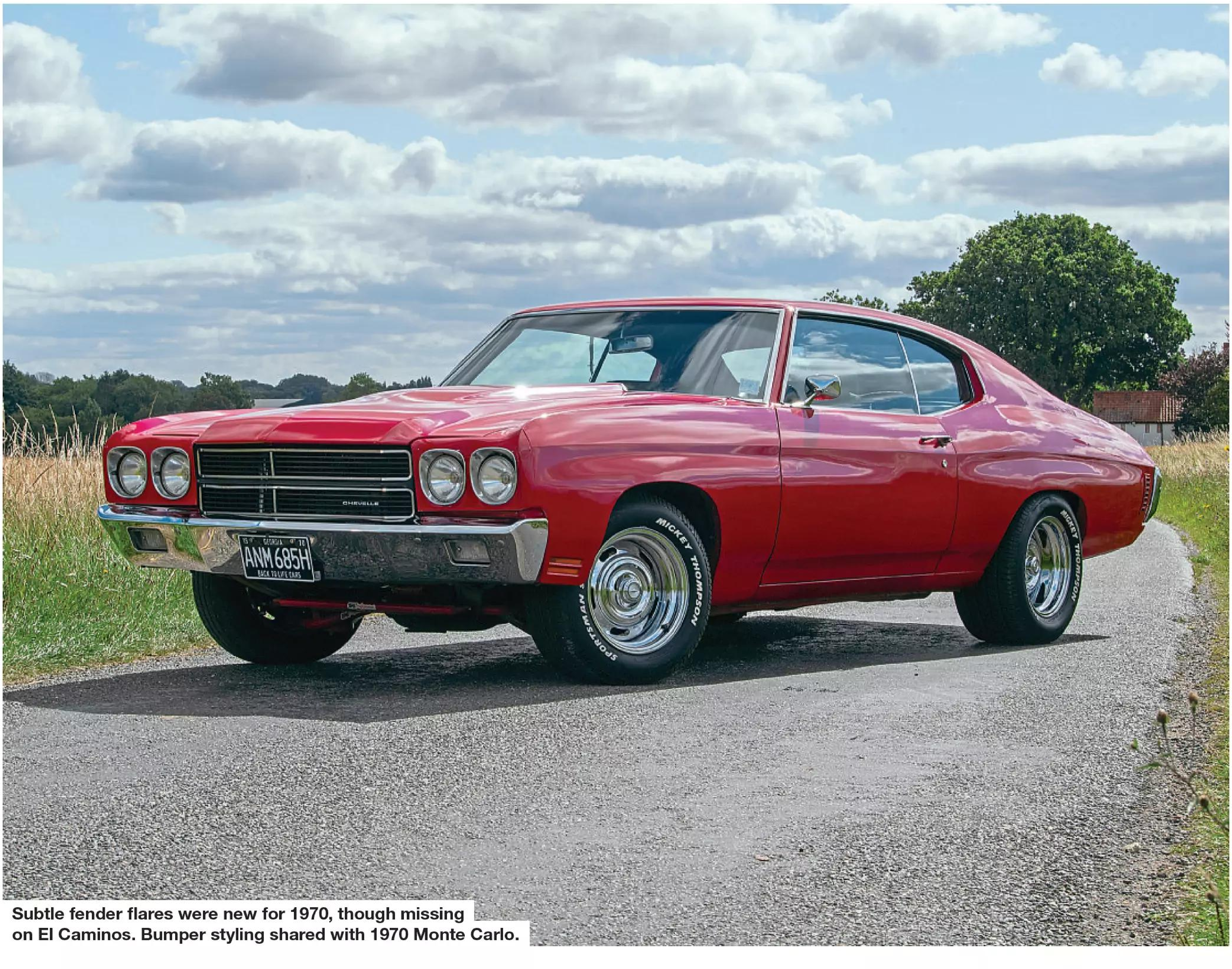
Chris pulled out the 350cu in V8 the Chevelle arrived with, "although it had left the factory with a 350 it was no longer a matching-numbers car…" and dropped in a 350 he'd originally been building for his El Camino. Although by the time you read this there will be a 383 stroker powering the Chevelle. "It's polished and has a roller cam – I can't wait…

"It came with a TH350 gearbox, but it wasn't especially strong, I did a burnout at a mate's and driving home discovered I now only had second gear. My good friend Jon Bennett of American Automatics, who's sadly since passed away, rebuilt the transmission. With the 383 going in I'd like to fit a five-speed TKX gearbox which should transform the car."

Another big change was uprating the brakes and suspension. "I've had the entire car in bits. It now has an uprated 9in rear end with Mickey Thompson tyres, Stage 2 UMI Developments suspension, including anti-rollbars front and rear, quick ratio steering and Hydraboost brake booster with four-wheel Wilwood disc brakes. I've also fitted a stainless-steel exhaust since you photographed it and added a new SS dashboard."

Naturally, Chris is now extremely happy with his updated Chevelle and sees no reason he'll ever sell the car: "I might be tempted by a 1987 Buick Grand National, although it would have to be a genuine GNX. I've also got a 1949 Suburban, I'm building a 56 Olds on a Chevelle frame and Sally drives a 1965 Mustang, so there's always something interesting to take out.

"But this Chevelle is special to me, with the upgrades it handles really well and I can still use it to drive to work. The best thing about it is the noise. The new parts have really improved the Chevelle, it's the same exciting car to drive – except now it does what you tell it to." ★



Subtle fender flares were new for 1970, though missing on El Caminos. Bumper styling shared with 1970 Monte Carlo.

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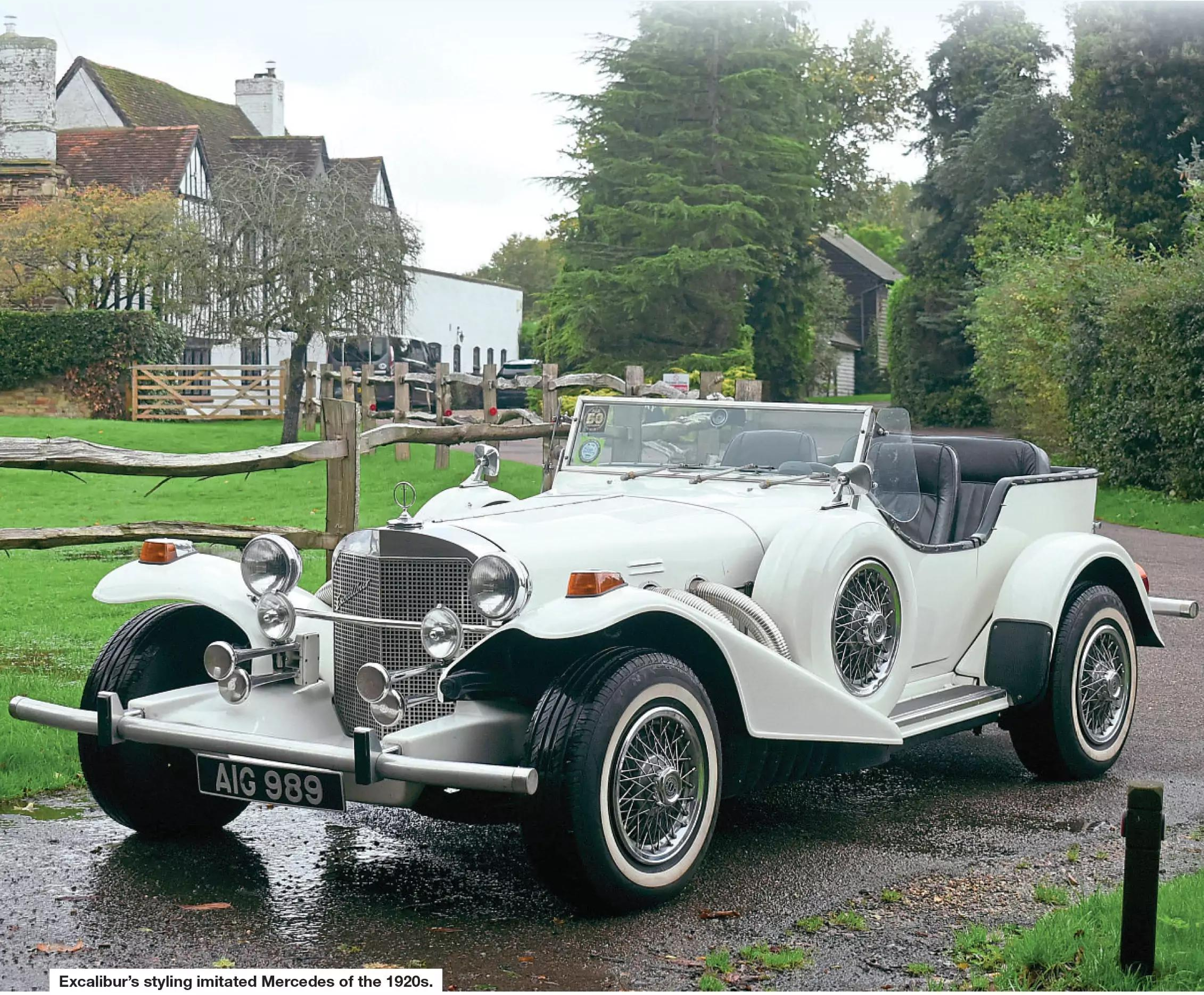
High flyer

Excaliburs were expensive showpieces for the stars. Few, if any, would have sold to people in serious-minded professions. Aircraft engineer Joe Irwin isn't your typical Excalibur enthusiast, but this one just fell into his hands after spending 13 years with an eccentric sheikh…

Words and photography: Zack Stiling



Excalibur's styling imitated Mercedes of the 1920s.

This car once belonged to Abu Dhabi's 'Rainbow Sheikh'.

One might suppose that anyone with a collection of four American cars has probably been into the hobby a long time, but where Joseph Irwin is concerned, that's not the case at all.

The fact is, he only started collecting two years ago, and quite unwittingly at that. The car that started it all was this 1977 Excalibur SS Phaeton Series III.

The Excalibur was a fascinating creation which embodied a sort of microcosm of American car culture – that of celebrity. It introduced the concept of a neo-classic, a car which combined styling cues from elegant prewar designs with the convenience and luxury of up-to-date technology.

Its originator was industrial designer Brooks Stevens, who contributed so much to the stylish aesthetic of mid-century America. Stevens' pen had a hand in shaping certain postwar Harley-Davidsons, the Jeepster and Jeep Wagoneer, and the 1962 Studebaker Gran Turismo Hawk, but despite all those achievements, the Excalibur remains the design for which he is best known, and it was quite at odds with the streamlined future he had hitherto espoused.

Away from the office, Stevens was an enthusiast and collected historic cars which, from 1959, he displayed in the Brooks Stevens Automotive Museum.

The first Excaliburs were three lightweight, road-going sports racing cars he built in 1952, which raced extensively with the Sports Car Club of America, but as a manufacturer his story begins in 1963. He was coming to the end of a four-year contract as design consultant for Studebaker and was disappointed with what he regarded as a dull range for 1964.

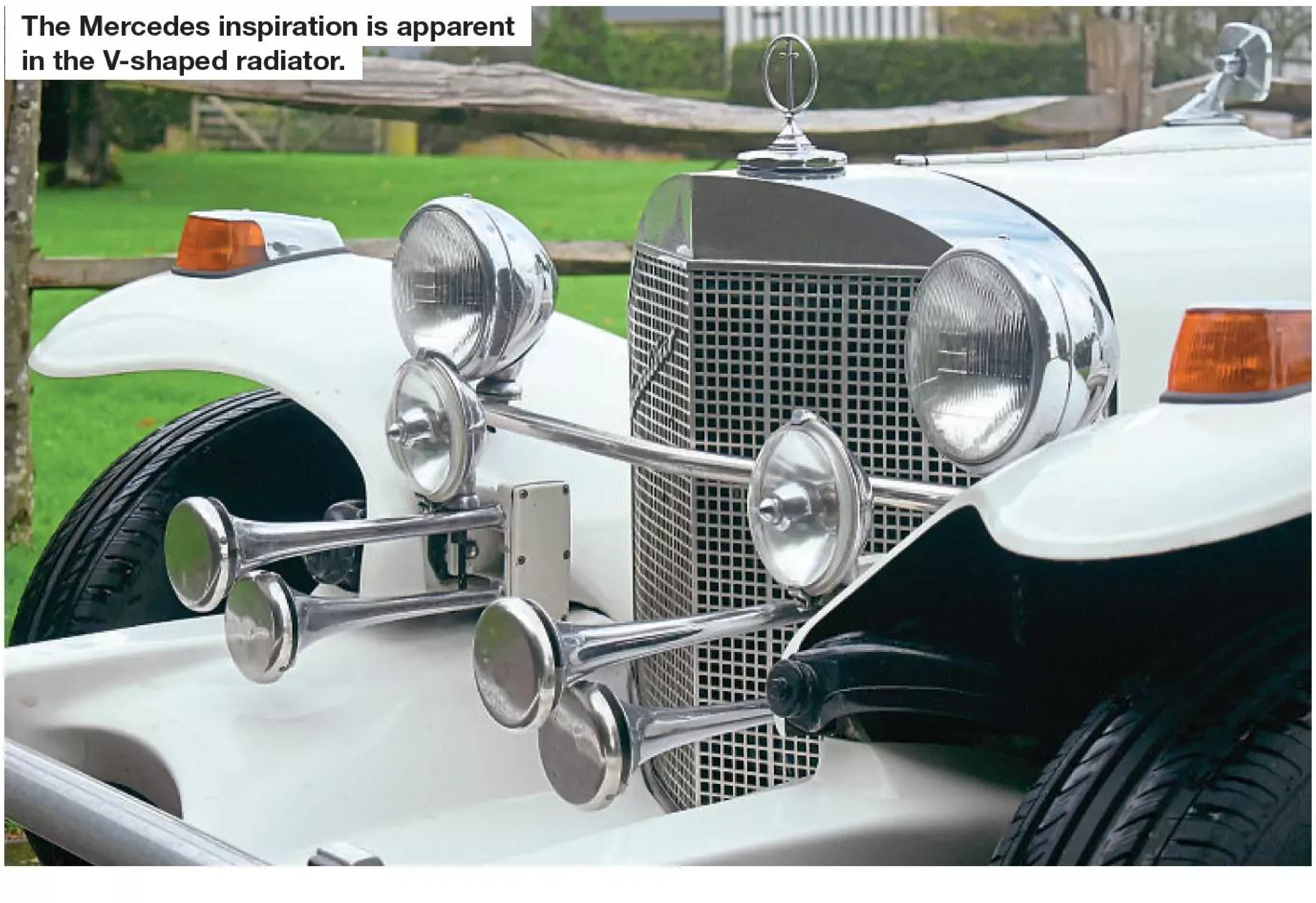
He maintained they needed a showstopper to dazzle the public and, with sons David and William, devised the prototype Excalibur, using a 109in-wheelbase Lark Daytona chassis with a supercharged Avanti V8, for their stand. The late 1920s SS and SSK Mercedes-Benzes were one of Stevens' favourite designs, and the body was essentially a straightforward SSK copy. Studebaker's risk-averse head office was not impressed, but the car was displayed separately at the New York Auto Show and was a hit.

SS Automobiles was established in August 1964. In 1966 the company was re-formed as the Excalibur Automobile Corporation, and the original SSK model was joined by the SS Roadster – similar, but with full-length wings and running boards – and the four-seat SS Phaeton. In many respects, the cars were distinctly modern, and instead of relying on traditional coachbuilding, the bodies were simply turned out of glass fibre moulds.

The other change for 1966, with Studebaker on its last legs, was a switch to Corvette engines, and in 1970 the modified Daytona chassis was replaced by a specially designed box-section chassis, which gave rise to the Series II, and saw the SSK discontinued.

The Roadster and Phaeton were offered with independent suspension, four-wheel disc brakes and a choice of four-speed manual or Turbo Hydra-Matic transmissions. It will be noticed that, at some point in the early Seventies, Excalibur raided the Volkswagen parts bin, with the indicators and chunky rear light units having Beetle origins.

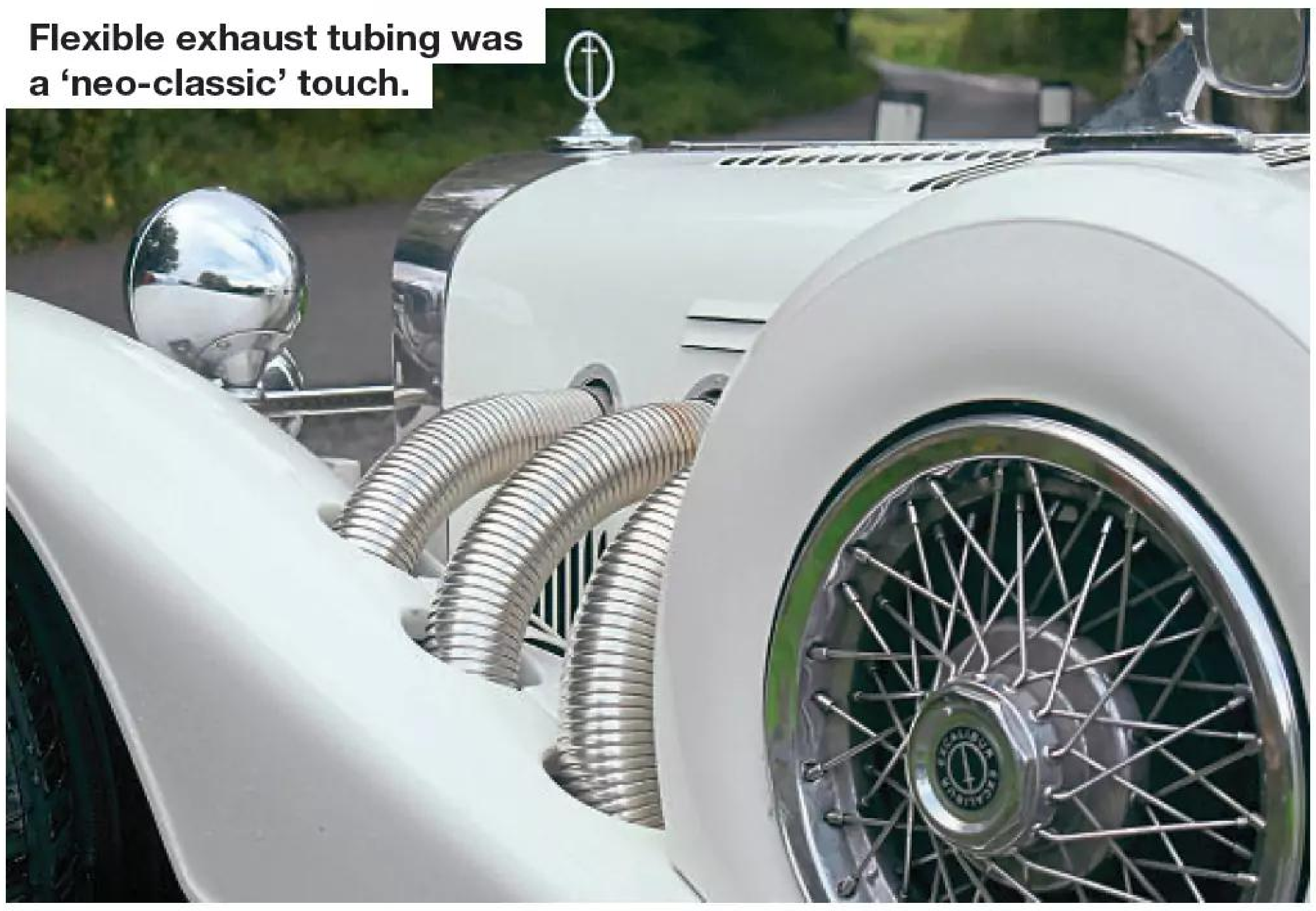
The Series III took over in 1975, little-changed except for some pandering to emissions and safety regulations with 'shock-mounted solid


The Mercedes inspiration is apparent in the V-shaped radiator.

Indicators and rear lights have very different Germanic heritage…

Excalibur's sword is a legally safe take on the three-pointed star.

…namely the Volkswagen Beetle.


Flexible exhaust tubing was a 'neo-classic' touch.

aluminium bumpers' and a detuned 454ci Chevy V8 which produced 215bhp. It soldiered on happily until 1981, when the Series IV took over with heavily restyled bodywork favouring luxury over a sporty image, and that continued until 1986, when the company suffered bankruptcy. New owners put the Series V into production, with truly ostentatious sedan and limousine versions added to the range. The curtain would eventually close on the marque in 1990.

For a car produced in such small numbers, it did well to remain in production for 25 years, but an extremely high purchase price and the lure of exclusivity kept it viable.

Series I and II SSKs and Roadsters entered the hands of numerous celebrities, including Steve McQueen, Tony Curtis, Dean Martin and Roy Orbison, but the Series IIIs were the best sellers.

Annual production only exceeded 100 cars for the first time in 1973, and thenceforth Phaetons would massively outsell Roadsters, though they were equally priced. Speaking of price, it rose drastically ever year, typically by about $2000 during the late Seventies. Joe's car was one of 222 Phaetons produced during 1977, when the price was $23,600. Over at Cadillac, an Eldorado was $11,187 and a range-topping Fleetwood limousine $19,014. Excaliburs reached the peak of their popularity in 1979, with 367 sold in both styles.

The Excalibur always has been a love-it-or-hate-it car. Owners of genuine vintage cars are not always amused, and there are others who see it as a symbol of kitsch. For Joe, it was not a case of love at first sight so, we might ask, exactly how did he become its proud owner?

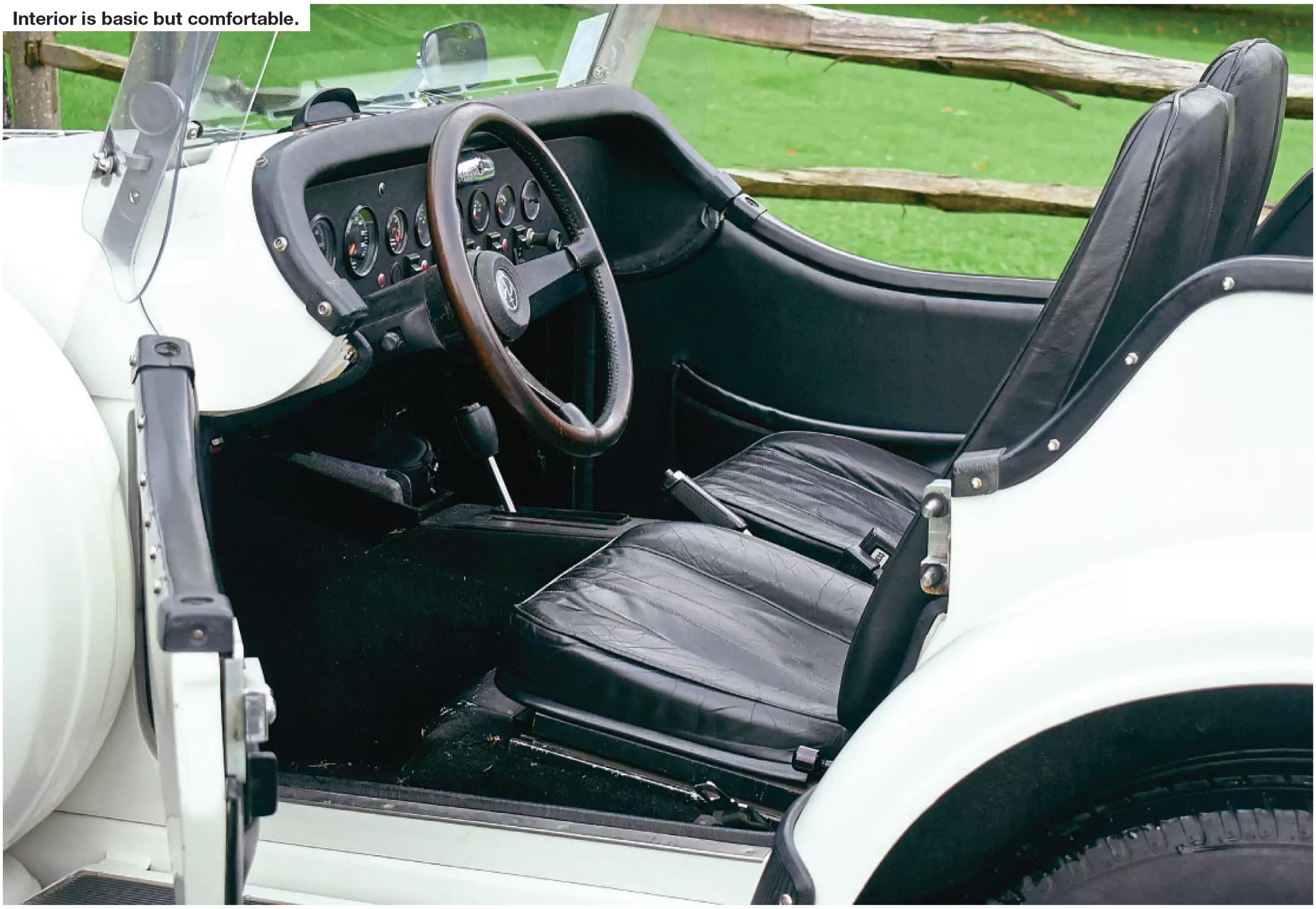
He grew up in 1940s Edinburgh and life from the earliest days of childhood revolved round aviation. "I'm an aircraft engineer by trade and have been basically since I was a boy," he says. "My father was a licensed engineer before the war and he set up flying schools in Edinburgh. My interest has always been in aviation."

That explains why his first vintage vehicle project was the restoration of a 1948 Taylorcraft Auster, a military observation aircraft of a type used during the war. He rebuilt it in his garage at home and still flies it. He can also tell many an interesting tale about his time spent with a Hawker Hunter squadron in Yorkshire when the Cold War was at its height, but for all his preoccupation with aircraft, he has had some sympathy for vintage cars ever since buying his first car at 18. "It was a 1939 1½-litre SS Jaguar drophead coupe. I paid £50 for it, but I had to sell it when I was posted to Singapore in the Sixties."

The SS was followed by the usual run of British family cars – Sunbeam Rapier, Ford Zephyr, Wolseley 6/80, Morris Minor Traveller and so on – but there were never any plans to get

»

Series IIIs had glass fibre spare wheel covers.



Interior is basic but comfortable.

The rear seat has two positions.

back into old car ownership. Then, suddenly, the Excalibur appeared on his driveway. "My wife died two years ago and my son Alan decided I needed a project and went and bought the Excalibur on an auction site and said: 'There's a project for you.'

"I didn't know anything about it until he arrived on my drive in it. 'What the hell is that?' was my initial reaction."

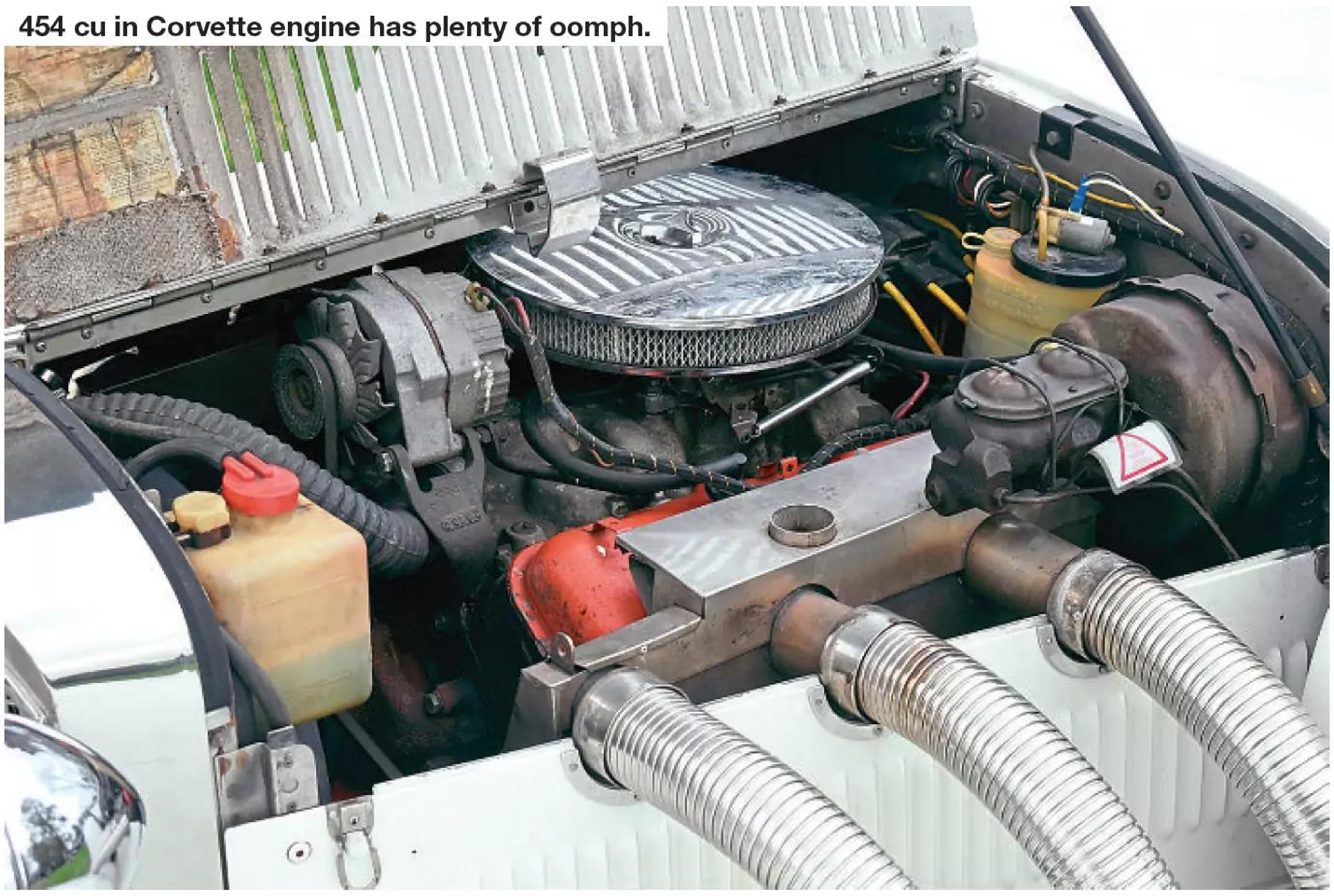
Alan corroborates the story, repeating some of the uncomplimentary phrases Joe directed at the car, prior to Alan explaining that it was, in fact, a present. After the shock had worn off, Joe's attitude softened and he soon disappeared into his garage to take a closer look at the epitome of 1970s American glamour. Before long, Alan interjects, Joe was in the garage all the time, just tinkering, not that the Excalibur really needed any attention.

The Excalibur really has been well cared for and its history file suggests that Joe is only the third owner from new. Chassis 776779 was originally finished in General Motors white with a black interior and sent to Italy, to be sold through the dealership of SEA Automobili in Rome. By 1989, it was in Abu Dhabi, and in the process of being sold to its previous owner, Alastair Ian Grant, coincidentally also a Scottish aviator. The late Mr Grant returned to Inverness with the Excalibur in 1991, where it was registered OAS 255R before his personalised plate was applied for, and he retired later in life to live in Rye, on the Sussex coast. He kept the Excalibur until his death in 2022, after which Alan saw it advertised online.

Fortunately, Grant recorded how he'd come to own the car, and who the previous owner was – none other than Sheikh Hamad bin Hamdan Al Nahyan, who is said to have bought it new. While working in the UAE, Grant taught him to fly and, having seen the Excalibur in his car collection and hankered after it for seven years, requested it as payment for his services.

It is worth saying more on Sheikh Hamad, known as the Rainbow Sheikh on account of his occasional propensity for multicoloured cars. The Arab royal has collected hundreds of cars, notable among which is a replica of a Dodge Power Wagon scaled up to the size of a house. He has accumulated many bespoke vehicles in his time, and the Excalibur was typical of his tastes, as he has in recent years commissioned no fewer than three SUVs with neo-classic details, all of them the size of lorries. Judge them as you will, but the majority of his collection is comprised of more normal cars, with a particular focus on American classics, off-roaders and Mercedes-Benz. Indeed, in 2020 he was awarded the Guinness World Record for

454 cu in Corvette engine has plenty of oomph.



the largest collection of 4x4s – they alone are said to have accounted for 718 of the cars in his collection. The curious reader may satisfy any further questions by flying to the UAE, where many are on display in the Emirates National Auto Museum.

When Grant bought the Excalibur, the odometer showed just 3680km (2287 miles), the car having spent most of its life on static display in the sheikh's private showroom. Numerous invoices show that Grant cherished the car, which accounts for its excellent state of preservation when Joe and Alan acquired it.

I have asked myself before now if I would own an Excalibur. As a cultural artefact they are fascinating, but could I enjoy it with all the stigma of ostentation that many people would attach? After a drive with Joe, I realise it's a question of attitude. To own one as a substitute for a genuine vintage car would obviously be foolish, and to own one as a show of wealth would be crass; but own one for the sake of fun and you've got exactly the right idea.

With the roof off and the sides exposed – the Phaeton was provided with both a soft-top and a hardtop – open-air motoring for four is a joy. There is nothing practical about it and it can't really be called luxurious, but at heart the Excalibur is all about the pleasure of motoring and, thus stripped of pretension, what once looked kitschy becomes simply characterful. It's comparable to a Mini Moke or beach buggy, but with the advantage of a lusty Corvette motor. For so many reasons, it's an extremely appealing car.

Joe, after two years, is every bit a convert. "I do like it a lot. It's a very nice car to drive, and it's a crowd-pleaser. It's got quite firm suspension, which is good. It's what the car needs, as it's quite heavy. It has been a very good, reliable runner. It holds the road well, accelerates well and the steering's positive. It's got no quirks other than that the steering's so positive, you can exceed the speed limit without trying."

With three other cars in use as well, the Excalibur tends to come out about 20 times a year, sometimes for shows and sometimes just for local journeys. "It never actually turned into a project car because it's been so good," says Alan, who makes sure he gets regular turns behind the wheel, too. Since they both found the Excalibur so much to their liking, Alan bought the next car that caught his eye, a replica of an Auburn 851 Speedster by Speedster Motorcars of Florida, and since then they have satisfied their itch for cars of real antiquity by buying first a 1928 Durant tourer and then a 1916 Cadillac Type 53 seven-seat tourer, one of the first Cadillacs produced with a V8.

All cars are in use, faithfully maintained by Joe. And might there be more to come? "Oh, yes," says Alan, beaming. "If something comes up, we'll find space for it…" ★

Joe Irwin, with son Alan, is an unexpected Excalibur fan.

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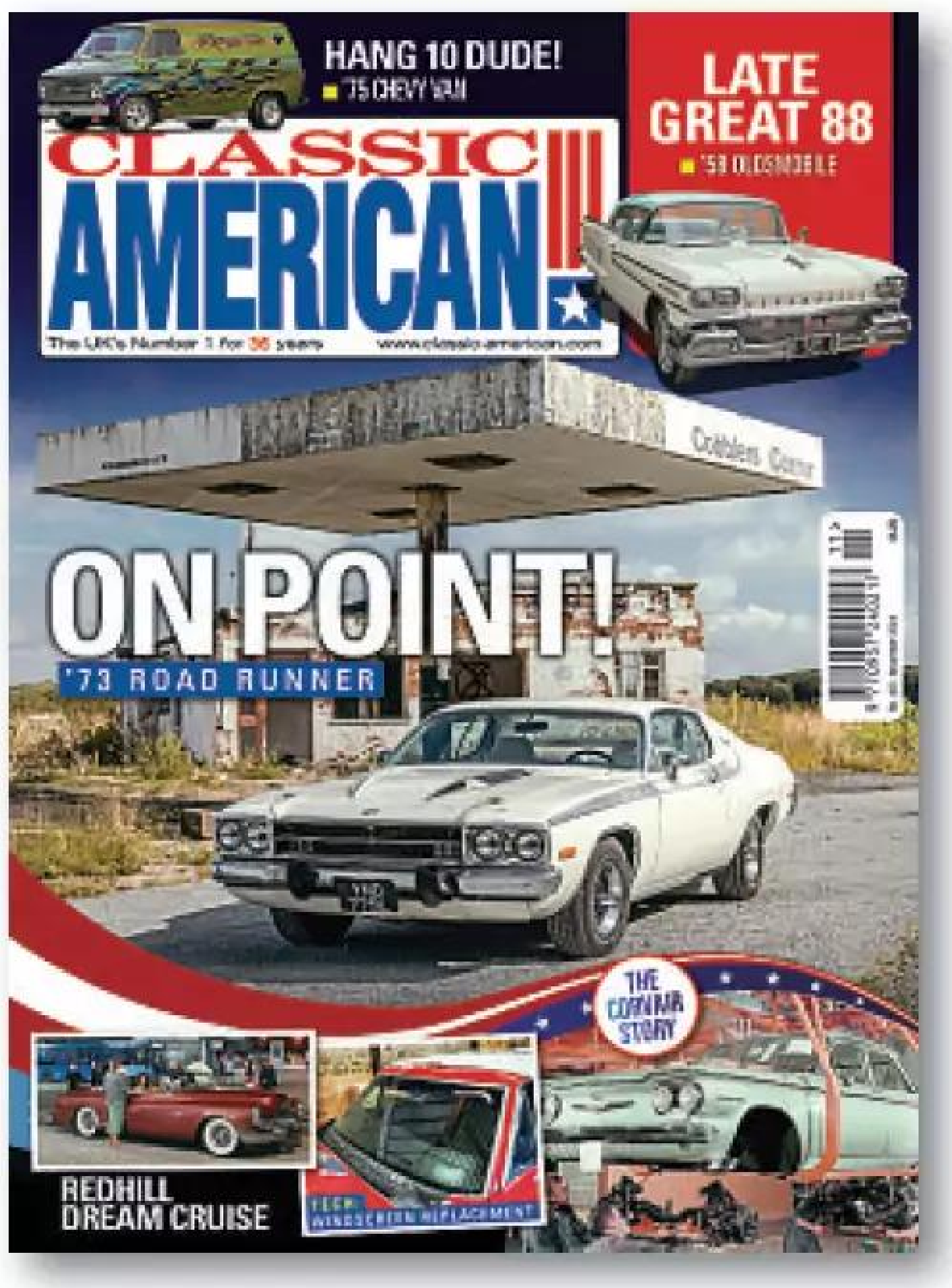
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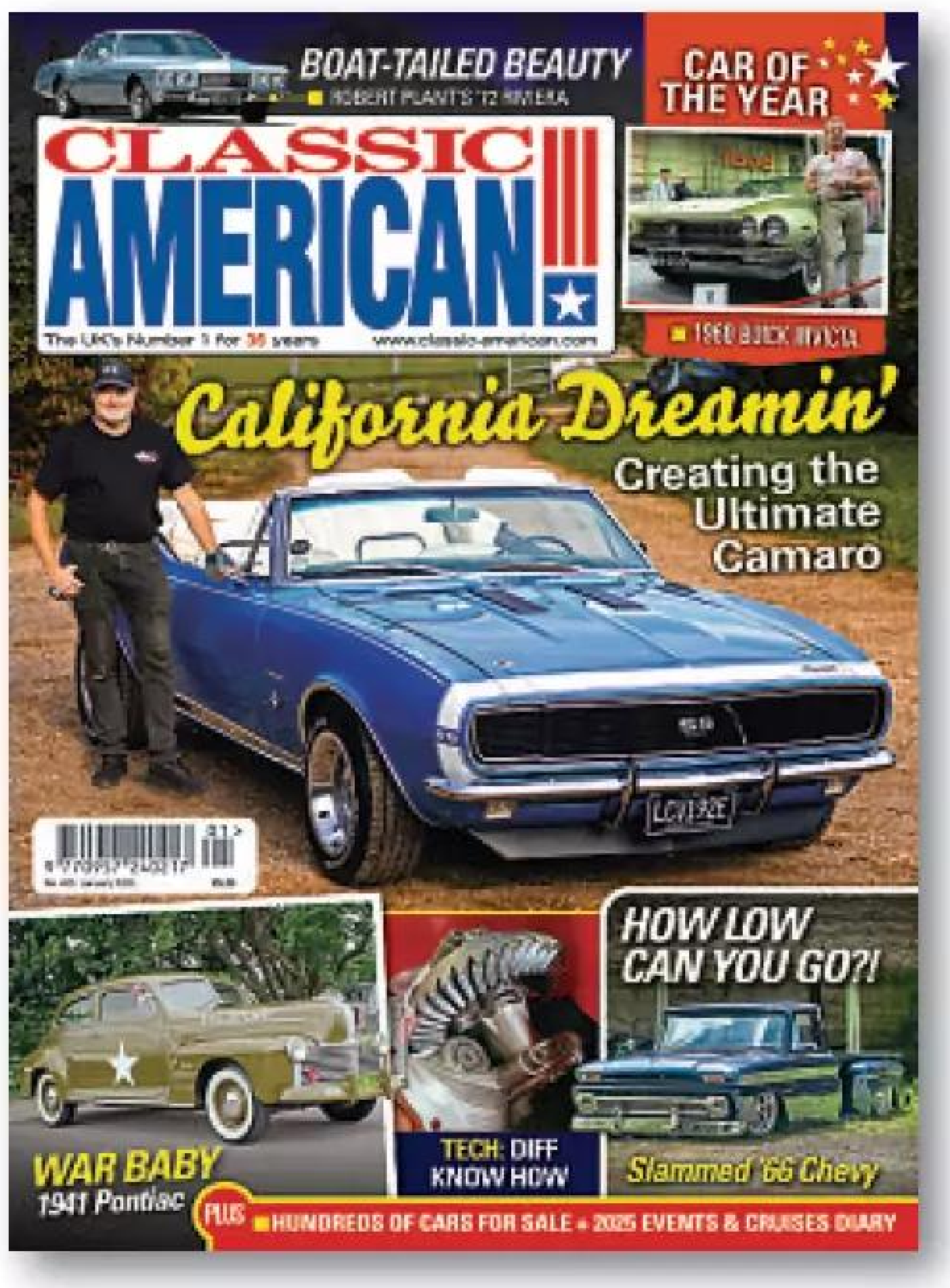
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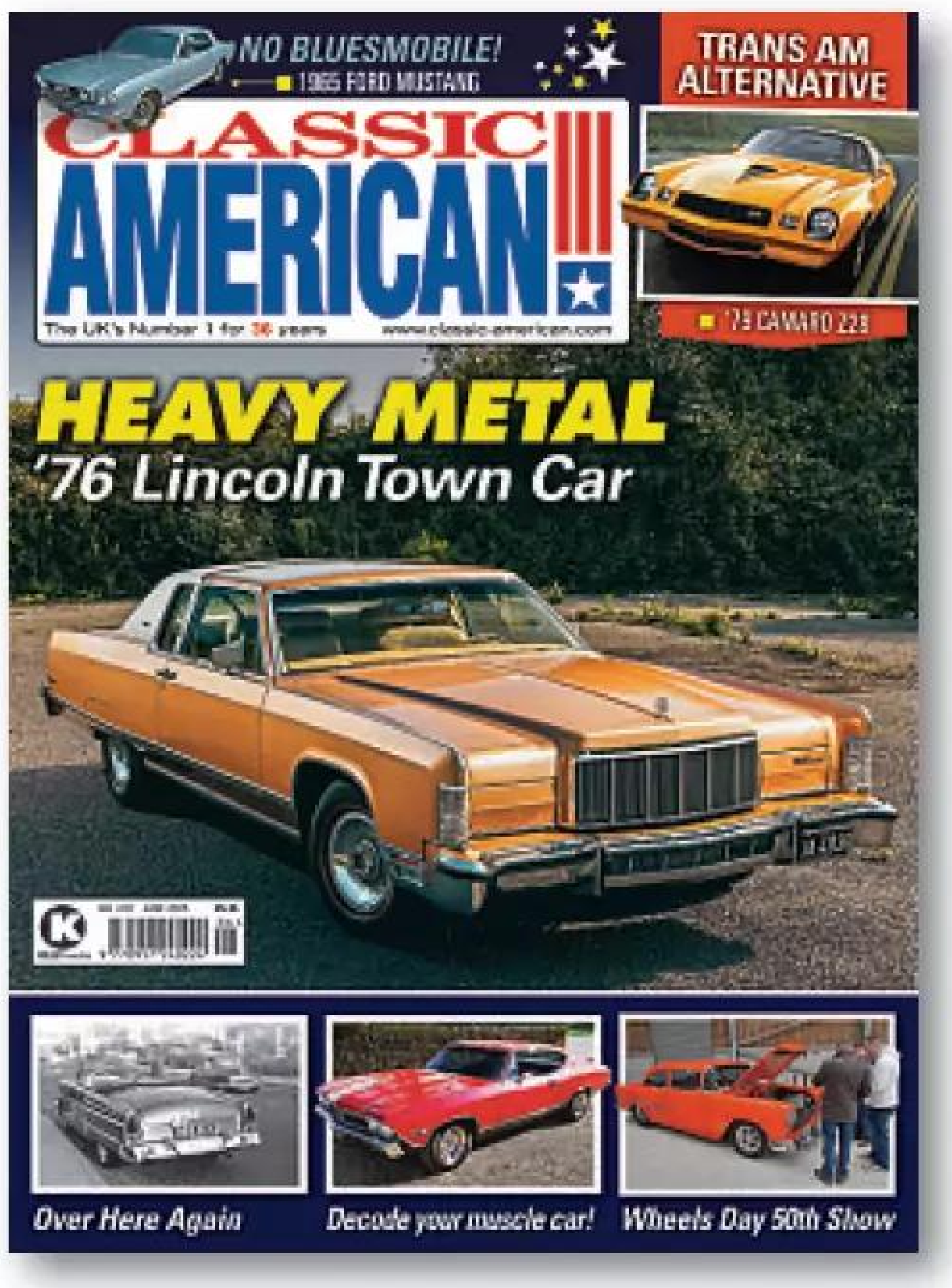
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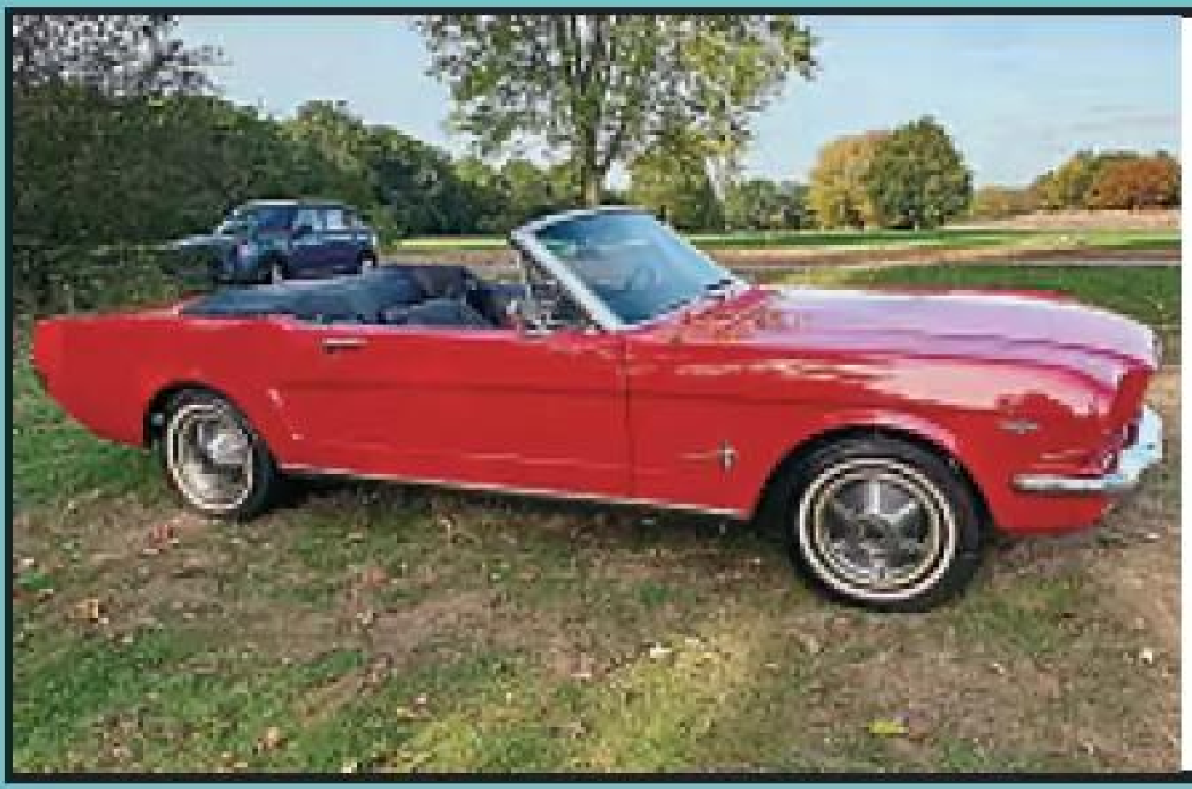

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Instead of... maybe try?

Part Two

Ten more down-low tips to save you thousands off your next American car purchase!

Words: : Jeff Koch

Last month we presented to you Instead of … maybe try? Our potted guide aimed at helping you save thousands by walking through some of the lesser known (and certainly less appreciated) car models that America has churned out since the end of the Second World War.

Could you be convinced? It got a strong enough response that we're giving it Round Two, for your consideration, education, amusement and bemusement.

In many cases, the cars we present are simply platform mates under different sheet metal (indeed, they're just as often under the same sheet metal). You don't see the steel when you're driving, after all; why not cash in on a less expensive version if the driving experience is going to be the same? Wallflower siblings made of the same genetic material can be just as much fun to dance with, after all.

This time, our survey of eras stretched into 1990, although the bulk of what we're looking at remains in the so-called 'malaise' (post-1972) era, as these tend to be more affordable to start with.

American cars got smaller, 'front-drivier' and less traditionally American as time went on, but we can delve into 1990s vehicles if there's demand (the year 2000 was a quarter-century ago, after all!)

We've dived headfirst into many of the popular categories which American cars were built to satisfy – full-size, mid-size, pony cars, light trucks and even American-size 'compacts' – and found some surprising savings for careful punters along the way.

All prices have been rounded to the nearest $500 using classic.com in $US. This site reports average transactions for a given year or car; body styles are not always broken out, so sedans are likely cheaper, while coupes and convertibles should be considerably pricier.

While some private sales are included, many of these prices are collated from published auction data from collector-car auctions across America. Obviously, the numbers here are only a guide and an average; they are not necessarily indicative of what would be available to you, if or when you go shopping.

As we mentioned in last month's first part, the American market was so big, and had so many companies making so many competitive vehicles, that we could easily fill volumes with such comparisons.

You'll note that Chevys tend to be expensive; Cadillacs too. Anything made by Chrysler, whether the lowliest Plymouth or the ritziest Imperial, tends to be pricier. There are exceptions, but the marketplace dictates the hows and whys. Also, we are not suggesting that a car valued at half its competitor is half the car. The numbers only reflect what the American market demands at the time of publication.

Use this guide, think a little different, and save yourself a fat wodge of cash in the process!

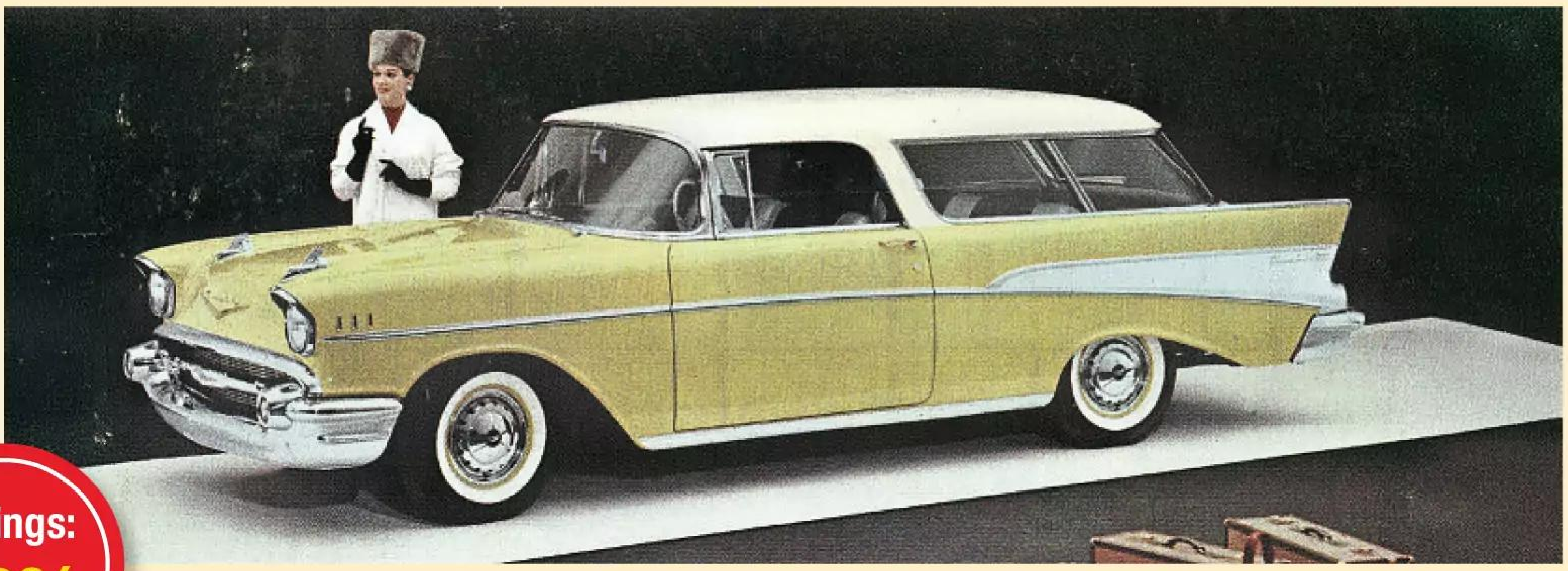
Instead of: 1957 Chevy Nomad $99,000

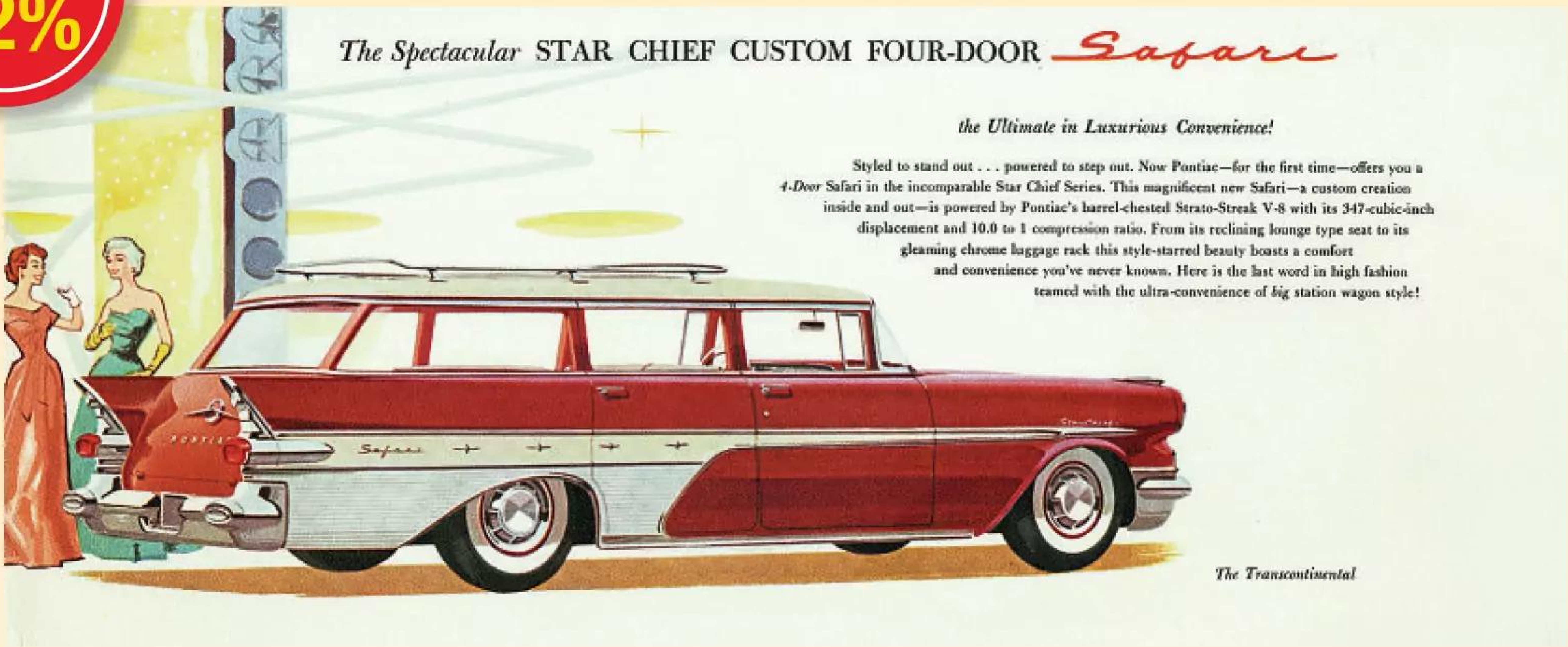
Maybe try?: 1957 Pontiac Safari $67,000

Station wagons – sorry, estate cars – were a relatively low-production affair. They're rarer, and now that going to car shows is a multi-generational affair, wagons can fit the whole family plus a picnic lunch.

Chevy's Nomad and Pontiac's Safari have been tops in the genre for decades. Much like the Chevy 210 and Pontiac Chieftain, these models are built on the same basic body; sheet metal is different but the greenhouse is shared. You get more engine with the Safari than you do with the Bel Air-based Nomad, with similar levels of trim and comfort, and for about a third less.

Savings: 32%




The Spectacular STAR CHIEF CUSTOM FOUR-DOOR Safari
the Ultimate in Luxurious Convenience!
Safari
The Transcontinental

Styled to stand out . . . powered to step out. Now Pontiac—for the first time—offers you a *4-Door* Safari in the incomparable Star Chief Series. This magnificent new Safari—a custom creation inside and out—is powered by Pontiac's barrel-chested Strato-Streak V-8 with its 347-cubic-inch displacement and 10.0 to 1 compression ratio. From its reclining lounge type seat to its gleaming chrome luggage rack this style-starred beauty boasts a comfort and convenience you've never known. Here is the last word in high fashion teamed with the ultra-convenience of *big* station wagon style!

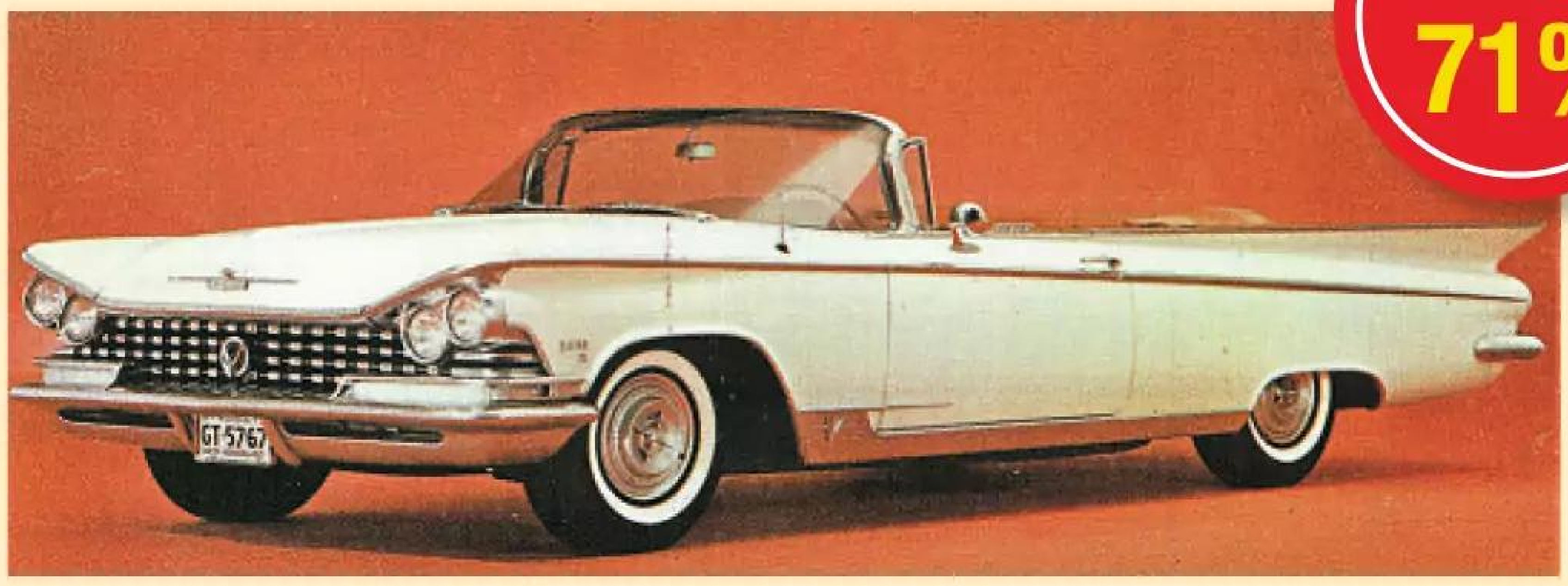
Instead of: 1959 Cadillac Eldorado $200,000

Maybe try?: 1959 Buick Electra 225 $57,000

The joke is that Cadillacs are for the filthy rich who inherited their money, while Buicks offer much of the same luxury for a class of people who earn their wages and treat themselves to something nice.

Six-and-a-half decades on, it seems that this might still be the case. The Eldorado and Electra 225 were kissin' cousins, and both nearly all-new for 1959 inside and out. There's only 20 horsepower difference between them, and they offer comparable quantities of power, style and toys. Pocket the savings for the petrol bill!

Savings: 71%



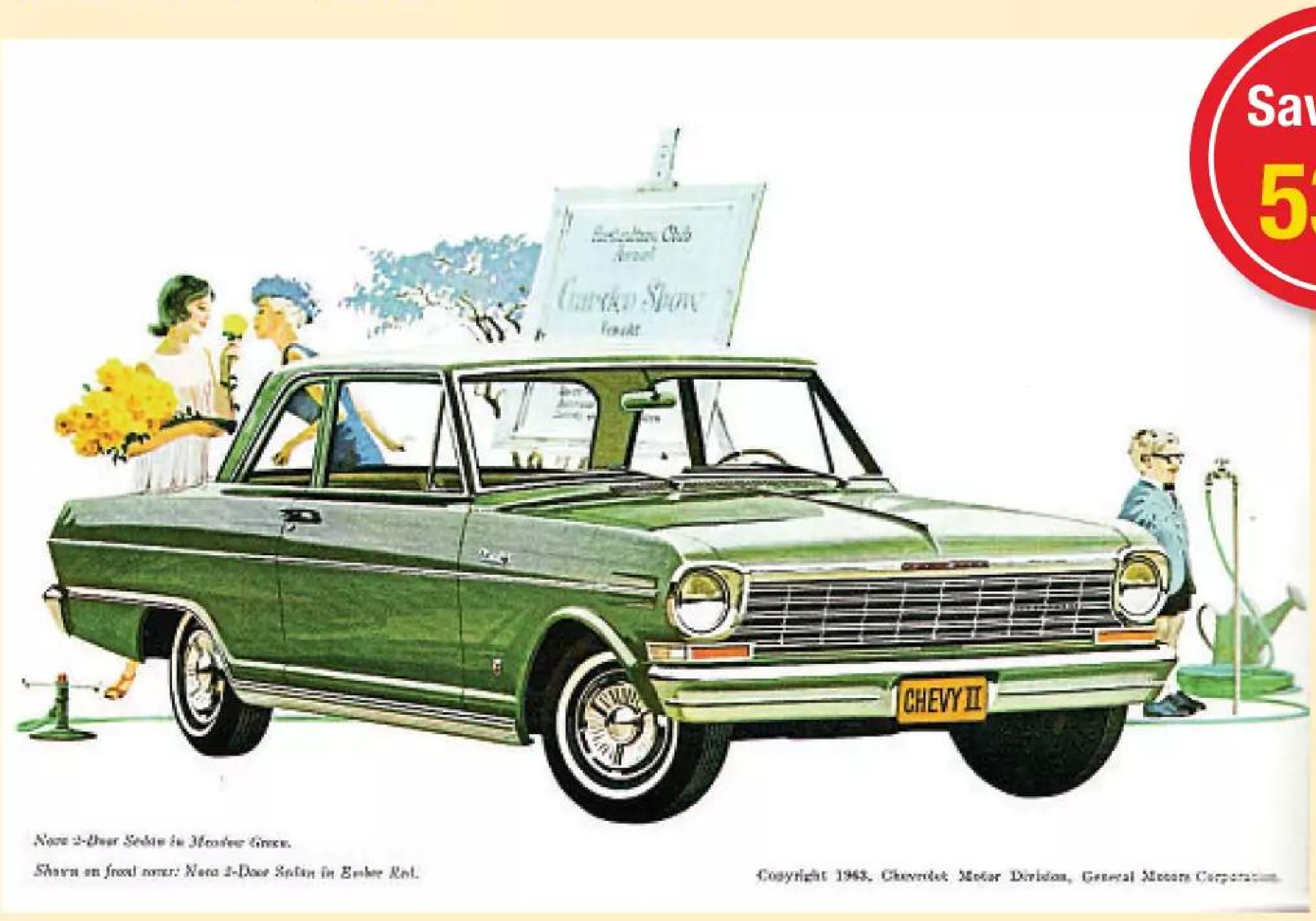
Instead of: 1964 Chevrolet Nova $31,500

Maybe try?: 1964 Studebaker Challenger $15,000

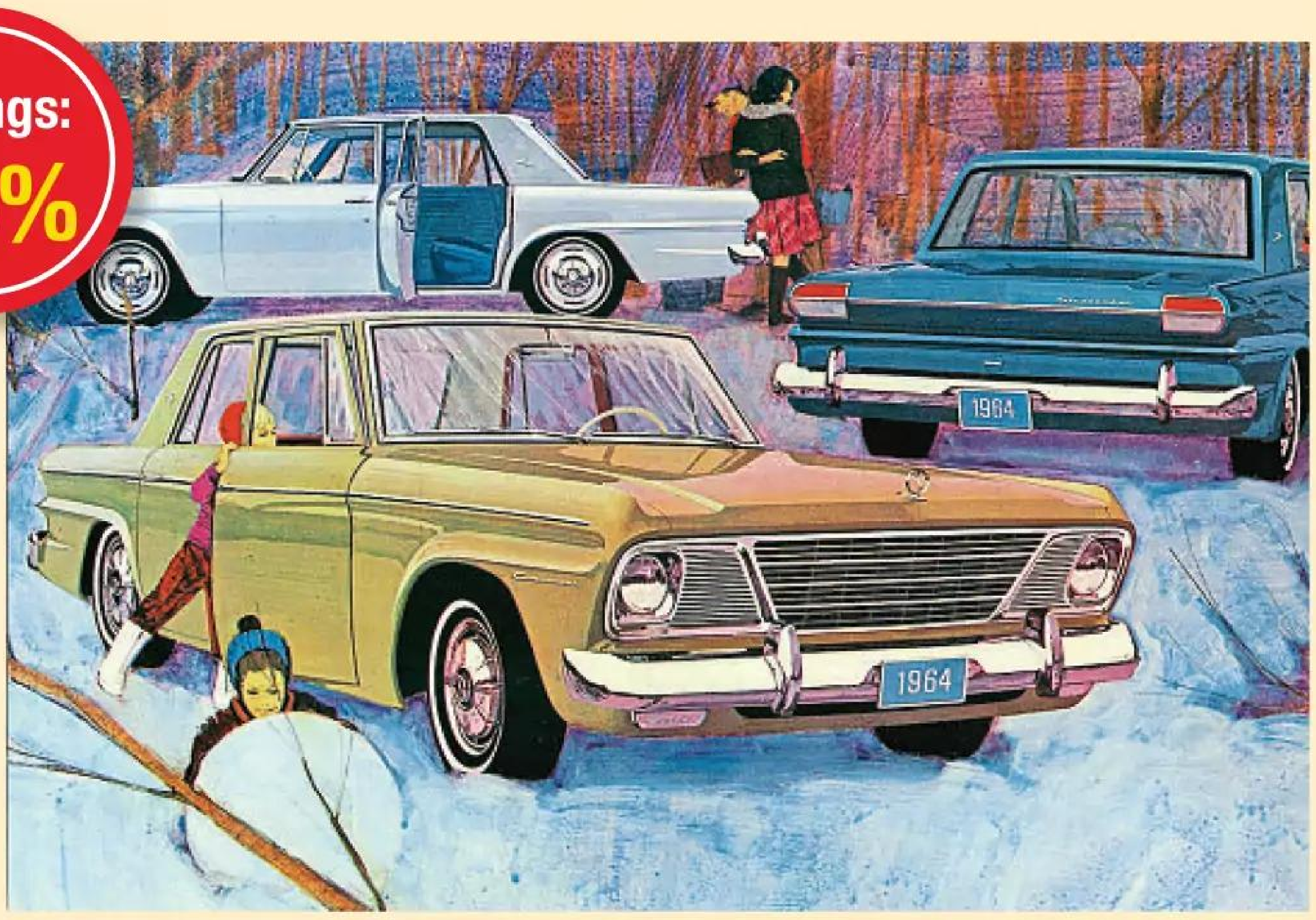
America's idea of compact seems terribly spacious – we've seen apartments near Salford with less room inside – and feel fairly big on our roads. Chevy's Nova came in a range of variants, including convertible, hot SS variants, snotty V8s, you name it. Studebaker's Challenger, a name which replaced Lark for 1964, offered two- and four-door sedan variants, plus a wagon.

V8 power was available, though hot Avanti-style supercharged stuff is exceedingly rare. Studebakers were solid and stolid in equal measure; today, the Studebaker Driver's Club has a strong enthusiast network.

**Vehicle shown is a 1965 Nova*


CHEVY II
Nova 2-Door Sedan in Meadow Green.
Shown on front cover: Nova 2-Door Sedan in Ember Red.
Copyright 1963, Chevrolet Motor Division, General Motors Corporation.

Savings: 53%

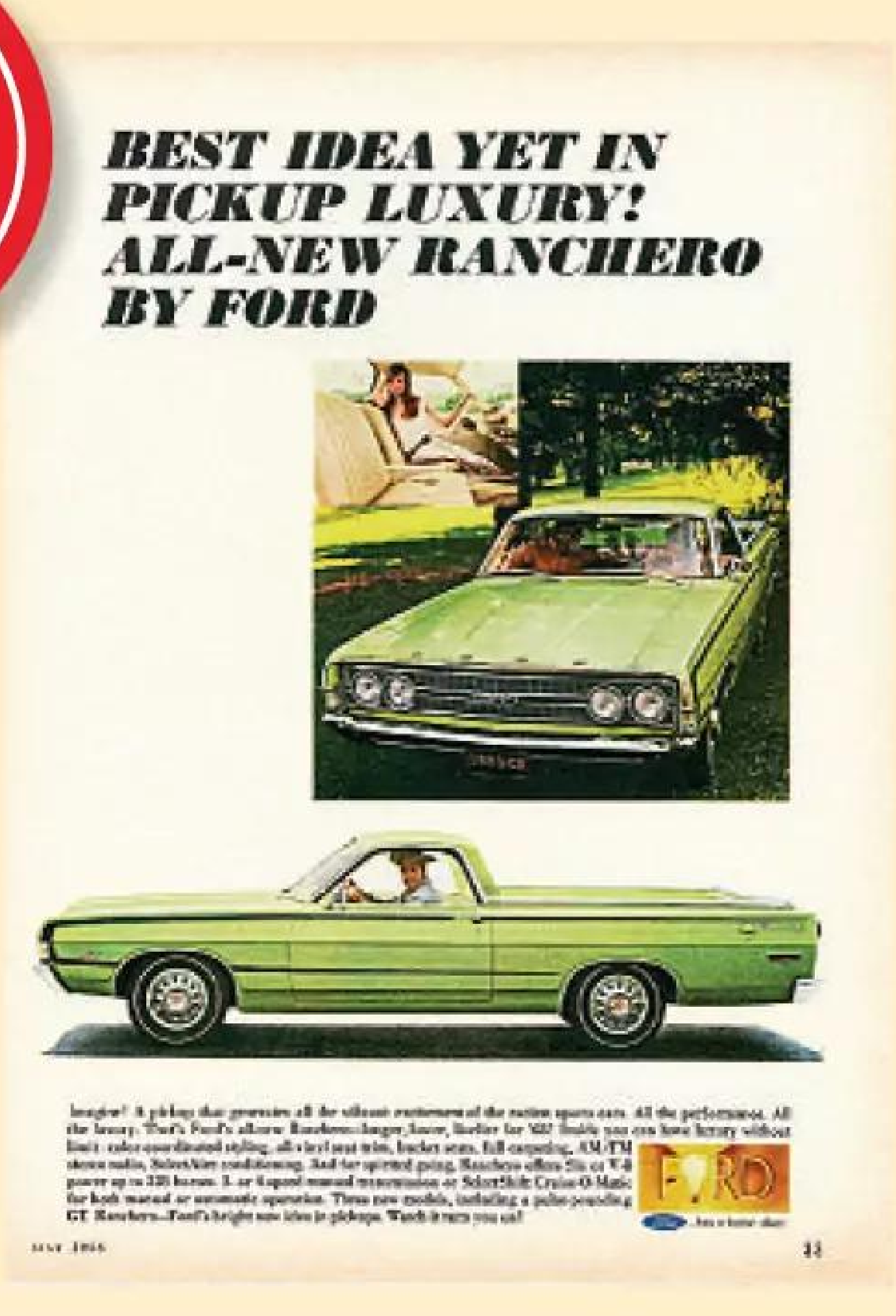


Instead of: 1968 Chevrolet El Camino $34,000

Maybe try?: 1968 Ford Ranchero $18,500

Adapting something that its Australian division had done for decades, Ford's Ranchero was first on the American scene in 1957; Chevy responded with the El Camino in 1959. A decade later both were based on the companies' midsize platforms (Torino/Fairlane and Chevelle, respectively), but they remained the mullet of motorised vehicles: business up front, party in the back. Combining the hauling capacity of a light truck with the drivability of an American car was something both companies did well – but these days, you can get into a Ford cheaper.

Savings: 45%


BEST IDEA YET IN PICKUP LUXURY! ALL-NEW RANCHERO BY FORD
FORD

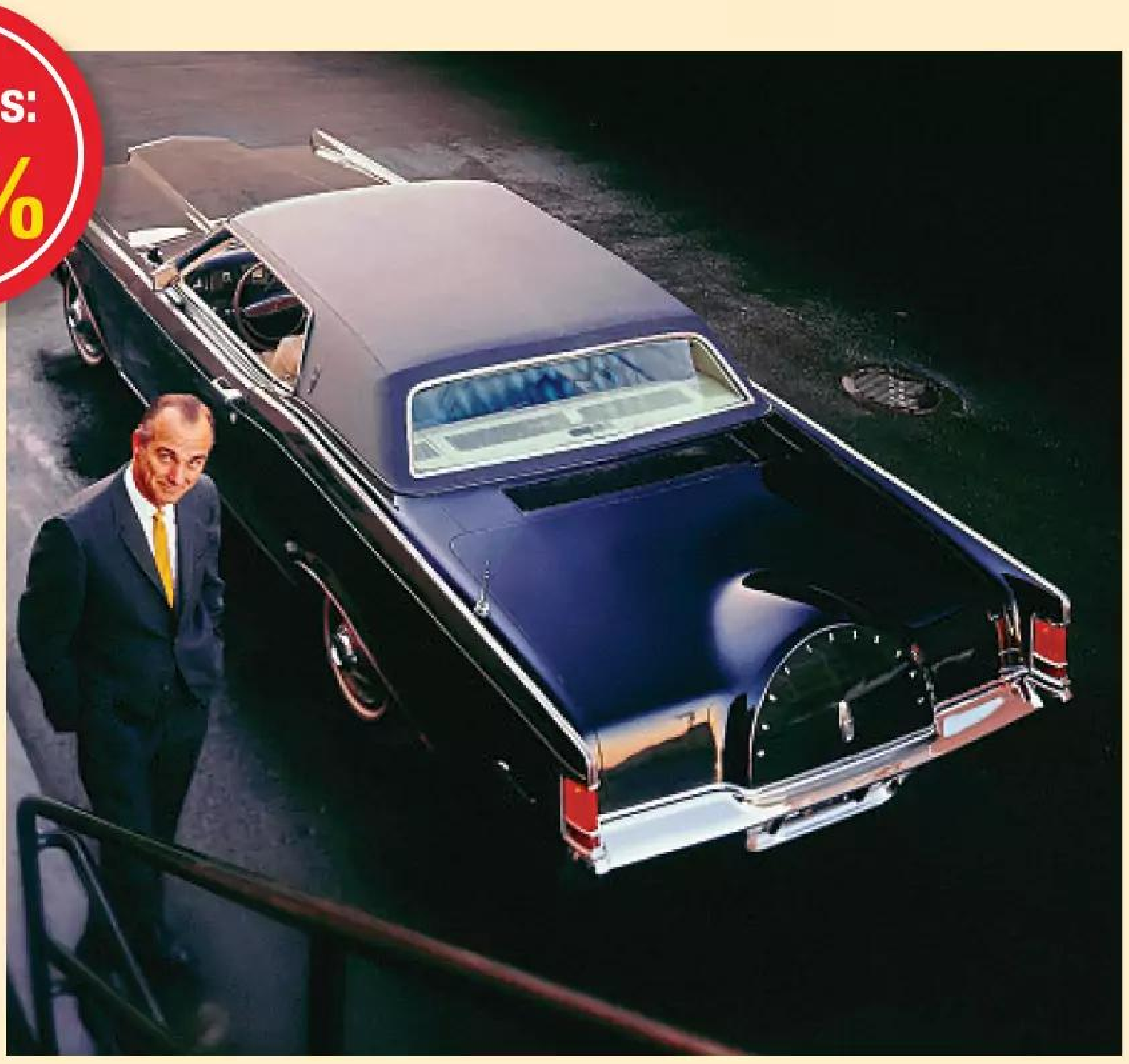
Instead of: 1969 Cadillac Eldorado $24,000

Maybe try?: 1969 Lincoln Mk III $18,000

The personal-luxury market took on extra importance at the luxury end of Detroit's new-car ladder. Cadillac's Eldorado features front-wheel drive but is about as far from your nan's Vauxhall Corsair as you can get.

The new-for-1969 Lincoln Mk III is a brawny, big-shouldered coupe that was far more conventional (i.e. rear-wheel drive), which makes it simpler to repair. It's also quietly a style icon: the roof looks slightly chopped, but only because of the higher beltline. It feels a little bit gangsta. High style at 25% off? Sign us up!

Savings: 25%

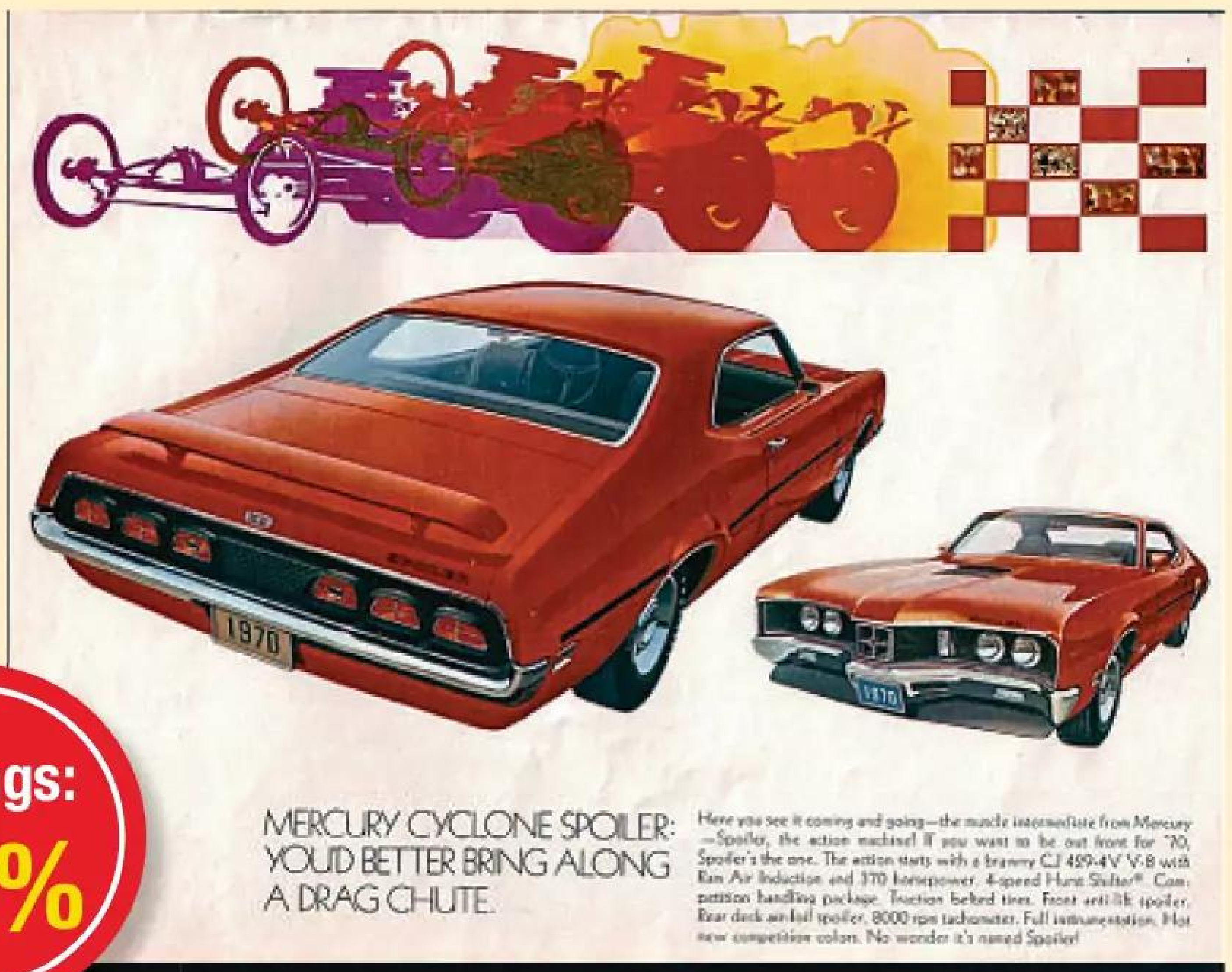


Instead of: 1971 Oldsmobile 442 $78,000

Maybe try?: 1971 Mercury Cyclone $50,000

By 1971, the muscle car wars were quickly fading into irrelevance (in terms of sales, anyway) but, despite the times, Olds' sporting full-frame 442 remains a more expensive proposition than Mercury's aggressive unit-body Cyclone.

The cars are big, but the engines are bigger – the hallmark of American muscle. And much like four years earlier, the price differential between them remains at around a third more for the Olds, despite more than double the number of 442s built over Cyclones for the season.



MERCURY CYCLONE SPOILER: YOU'D BETTER BRING ALONG A DRAG CHUTE.

Here you see it coming and going—the muscle intermediate from Mercury—Spoiler, the action machine! If you want to be out front for '70, Spoiler's the one. The action starts with a brawny CJ 429-4V V-8 with Ram Air Induction and 370 horsepower. 4-speed Hurst Shifter®. Competition handling package. Traction belted tires. Front anti-lift spoiler. Rear deck air-foil spoiler. 8000 rpm tachometer. Full instrumentation. Hot new competition colors. No wonder it's named Spoiler!

Savings: 36%

"It comes factory-blueprinted to save you the trouble and expense!"
4-4-2
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GM
1971 OLDS 4-4-2 W-30

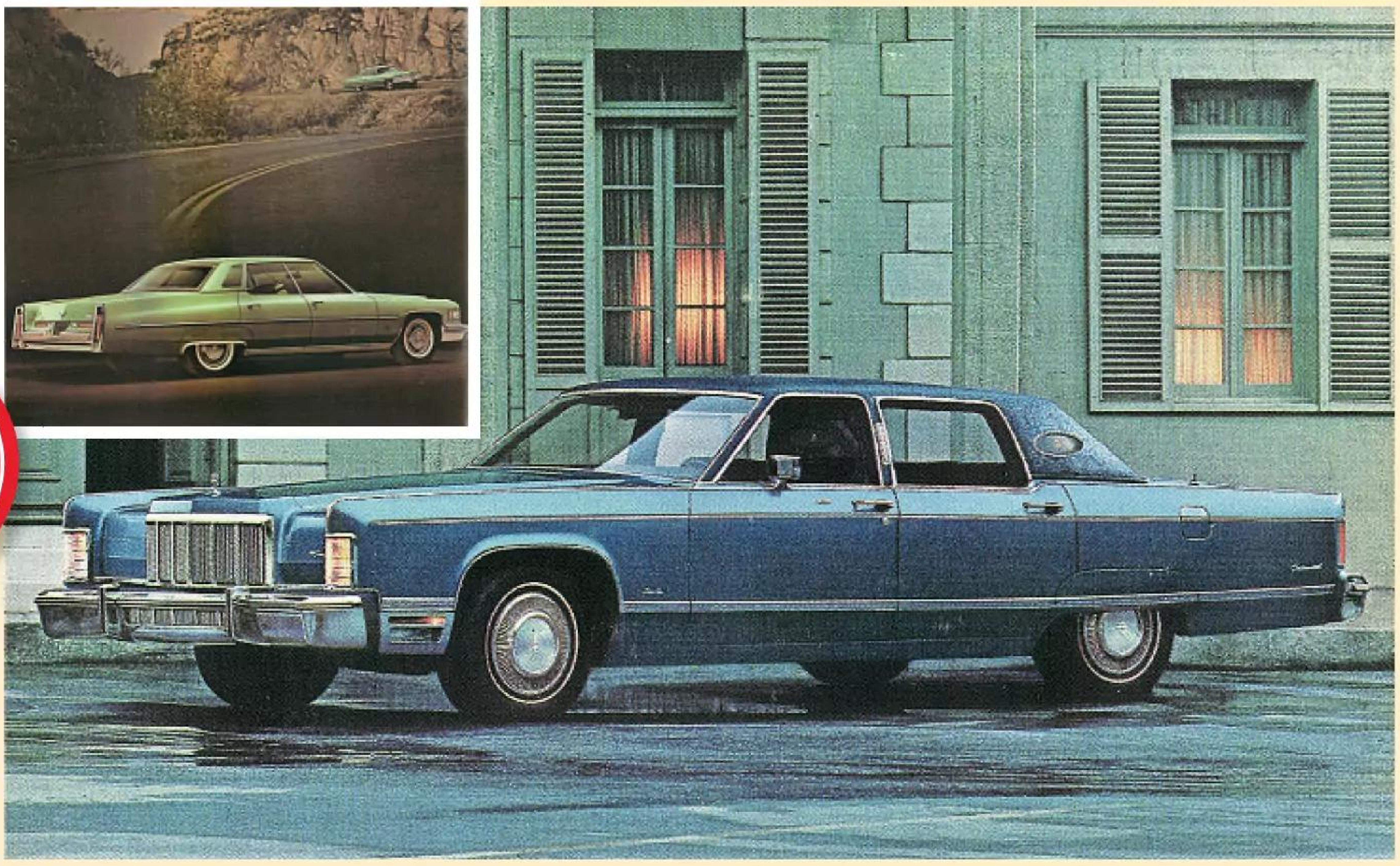
Instead of: 1975 Cadillac Sedan de Ville $23,000

Maybe try?: 1975 Lincoln Continental Town Car $11,000

Cadillac and Lincoln were at the top of the luxury-car food chain in 1975 (few counted the Imperial any more, which is probably why it disappeared after 1975), but buyers preferred the Cadillac, with 63,000 Sedan deVilles sold in 1975 over the Lincoln Continental sedan, which did a little better than half those numbers.

Lincoln's big 460 offered better horsepower than Caddy's carburetted 500ci 8.2-litre V8. And today, the Conti is valued at around half as much while giving you all of the plush acreage you could possibly want.

Savings: 52%



Instead of: 1976 Chevy Monte Carlo $18,000

Maybe try?: 1976 Dodge Charger $11,000

Once big engines were legislated out of existence, Detroit turned to long hoods, cramped cabins, thick-pile carpet, colour-keyed everything, acres of sound-deadening, and anything to keep the harsh realities of the 1970s outside.

Chevy's personal-luxury Monte Carlo was a best-seller whose popularity doubtless accounts for its robust value today. Dodge's Charger, based on the B-body chassis which dated back to the autumn of 1961, shared lines with Chrysler's best-selling (and far more expensive) Cordoba. Charger didn't sell well in the personal-luxury era and is little remembered, but mechanical bits will interchange easily.

arlo Landau Coupe. Shown with available bucket seats, deluxe bumpers, bumper guards and white stripe tires. (Also shown on cover.)
Custom Features are available for Monte Carlo. Some are illustrated or described in this catalog. Copyright 1975, Chevrolet Motor Division, General Motors Corporation.

Savings: 39%

1976 Charger Special Edition
2-Door Specialty Hardtop

DODGE CHARGER

Instead of: 1982 Chevy C/K1500 pick-up, $21,000

Maybe try?: 1982 Dodge D150 pick-up $15,000

The long-lived 'Squarebody' GM pick-ups from 1973-87 have been undergoing a renaissance with the custom-car folks.

Slammed to the ground on unfeasibly large wheels, this once-bargain build canvas has become so popular that they're starting to get priced out of reality. Consider, from the same era, a Dodge D150 pick-up. They're just as long-lived, although production was a fraction of what GM made, they're every bit as butch and imposing, they'll swallow any variety of era-correct engine upgrades, and for 'Mopar or No Car' devotees, that Pentastar will mean the world.

Vehicle shown is a 1983 Chevrolet

Savings: 29%

GET IN ON THE DODGE DEALERS'
GREAT GOLD RUSH
WITH THIS 1982 PROSPECTOR PICKUP!
RAM

VY 4 x 4 s. ACTION IS THE OPERATIVE WORD HERE.

Chevy's 4-wheel drive heart of it is a ht weight aluminum with synchronized lows you to shift in D at speeds of up to out leaving the cab. No getting out to lock and front hubs. Don't even think about it. It's done automatically when you simply move the shift lever inside the cab.

And Chevy 4 x 4s have power. Power to scramble over nature's obstacle courses. Power to climb and power to pull. Properly equipped, a Chevy 4 x 4 Pickup can move up to 13,500 lbs., including itself, passengers, equipment, cargo and trailer.

Chevy 4 x 4s have good ground clearance. Plus power steering, multi-leaf suspension and a front stabilizer bar to help smooth out the ups and downs.

Heavy-duty shocks are available on K10/20 models.

Choose from a big Chevy 4 x 4 lineup: ½-ton, ¾-ton and 1-ton models. Diesel or gas powered. Including K30 models with dual rear wheels.

Go roll in the mud with Chevy 4 x 4.

Once you do, it's hard to quit.

Instead of: 1990 Chevrolet Camaro IROC-Z $30,000

Maybe try?: 1990 Pontiac Trans Am GTA $11,500

Having long since shaken the bonds of divisional autonomy, the sporty IROC-Z and the more luxury-oriented GTA were the same animals under the skin. And so why is the Camaro nearly triple the value of a contemporary Firebird?

Hard to say, although sporting Camaros are certainly more in keeping with the brand's image than a luxurious Firebird. Most will come with T-tops; may we suggest adding a set of subframe connectors to stiffen the chassis and do away with a few inevitable rattles?

Vehicle shown is a 1989 Trans Am

Savings: 62%

1989 PONTIAC TRANS AM GTA
Ride Pontiac Ride!

IROC-Z
CAMARO

Three surprising outliers

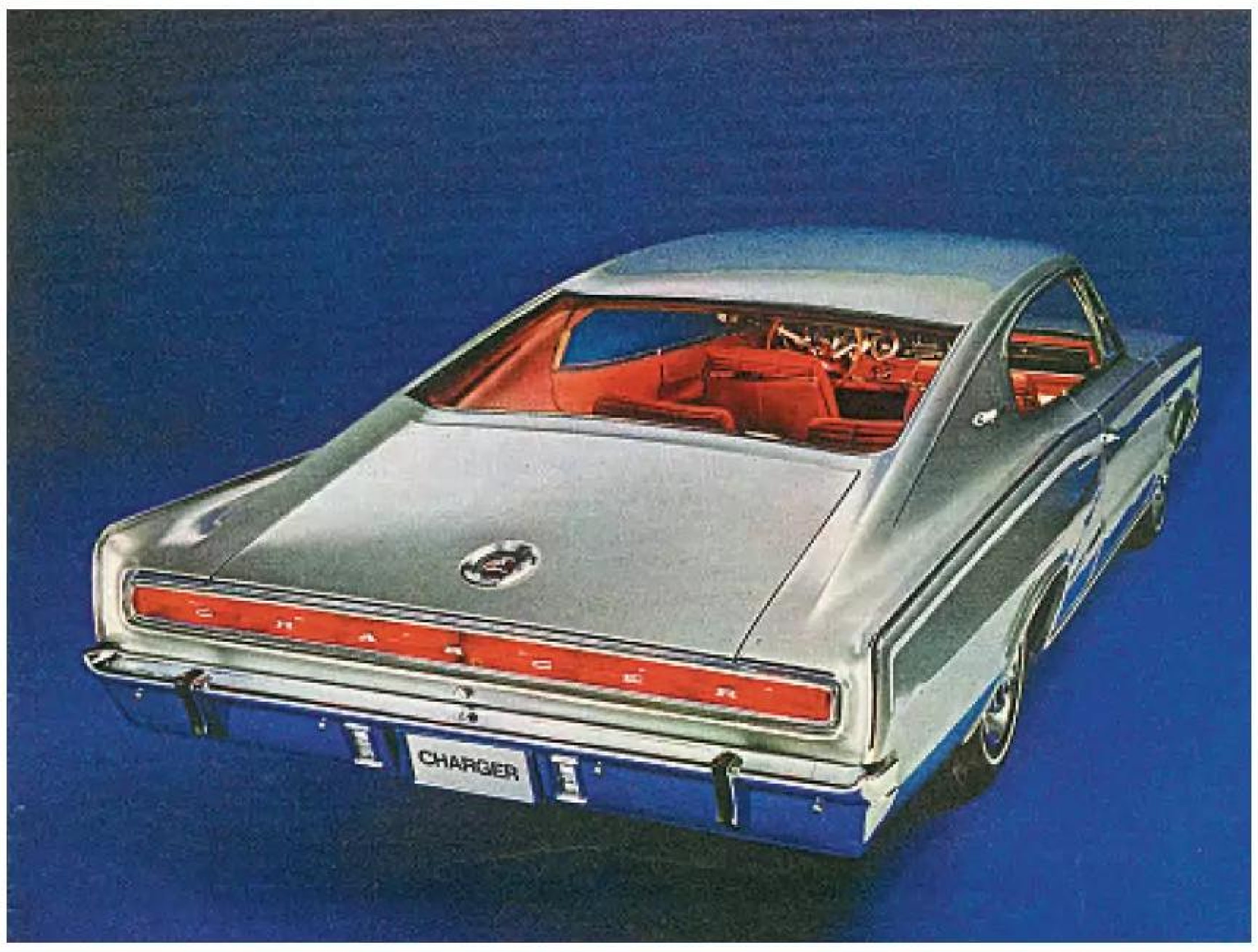
We walked into this story with a couple of assumptions that were simply flat wrong. We thought, for example, that a 1967 Mercury Cougar would average less than the same year's Ford Mustang coupe. Wrong! The Cougar averaged $27,000 while the Mustang averaged four grand less; we suspect that a Cougar's standard higher-spec (i.e. no six-cylinder 67 Cougars) brought the average up.

And moving later in the Mustang's life into the early 1970s, we were pleased to find a '72 Mustang (with a roof) averaging $21,000; we figured that a comparable AMC Javelin would be a fraction of this but, lo and behold, a '72 Javelin averages $23,000!

Finally, we took a look at some of the early muscle-era fastbacks.

Dodge's first Charger isn't the hit that the company hoped it would be, and plenty of 318-powered variants put it at $28,000 on average. Ford's fastback Torino didn't come along until 1968, after Dodge moved the Charger on to a new styling concept, and we were surprised to see that the average Torino rang in at $42,000 under the hammer.

Finally, we took a look at the first big fastback to market, the Rambler Marlin. It never sold in any great numbers either, but we were amazed to see that a clean 1966 example averaged $26,000 – just a couple of grand less than the first Charger.



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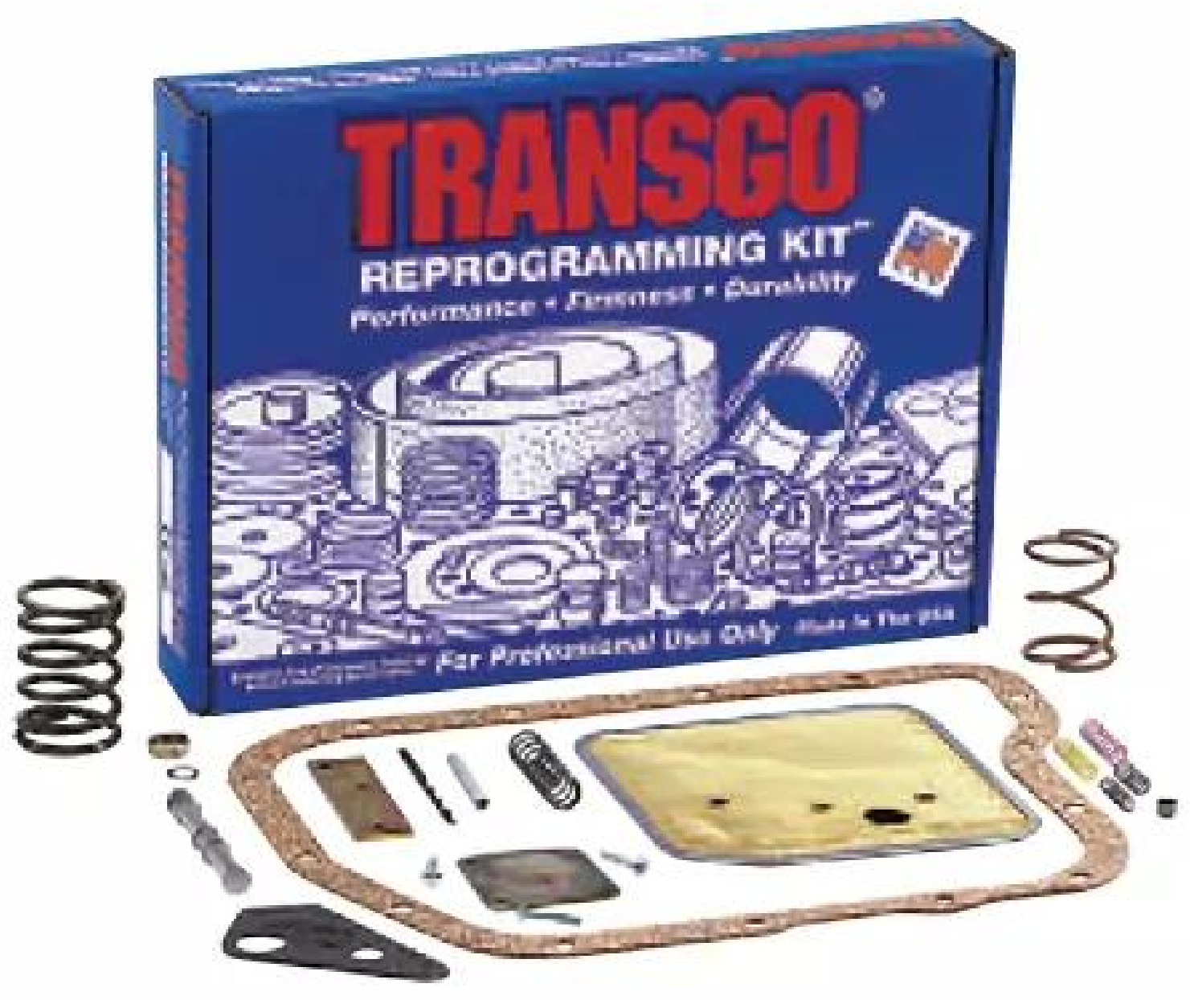

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Broncos in the boonies

A unique experience in Ford's newest iconic off-roader, with a dramatic backdrop showcasing the Bronco's uncompromising stance.

Words and photography: Huw Evans

BRONCO
UTAH
T37 2RZ

The Bronco Off-Roadeo is a unique four-wheeling experience that takes place amid some of America's most stunning scenery.

New Broncos are provided for all participants to drive.

Does the idea of travelling to some of America's most scenic destinations and then getting the opportunity to put a brand-new Ford Bronco through its paces appeal to you? If the answer is yes, then keep reading.

When the reincarnated Ford Bronco was introduced in the depths of the Covid-19 pandemic as a 2021 model, it became one of the most highly anticipated new vehicles of the year. While supply chain disruptions and idled assembly plants delayed introduction and made those early models a rare commodity, the Bronco has since become a ubiquitous sight on North American roads, challenging the once dominant Jeep Wrangler.

A range of options

Ford has been shrewd with marketing the Bronco, offering both two- and four-door bodies, as well as two engines (300hp 2.3 litre turbo four cylinder and 330hp twin-turbo 2.7 litre V6), two transmission options (seven-speed manual* and 10-speed automatic) and hard and soft-top roofs, plus a plethora of trim packages.

For 2025, a base Bronco starts at $39,890 stateside, and from there prices go up to $77,530 for the Stroppe Edition which pays homage to the original Bronco Baja Racers built by Bill Stroppe during the 1960s and 1970s. In between you've got a variety of trim packages, from the Big Bend to the Freewheeling, Black Diamond, Outer Banks, Heritage Edition and the Badlands.

Of course, if you really want to go full out, there's also the formidable Bronco Raptor, which starts at an eye-watering $91,930 and features a 418 horsepower 3.0 litre twin-turbo V6, specialised suspension with Fox dampers and a wide range of travel, monster tyres, enormous skid plates and a wide, aggressive stance.

On paper, it all looks very impressive, but the real test of a true sport utility's mettle comes down to how it performs both on and, more importantly, off-road.

Off-roading experience

Well, Ford has that angle covered, via its Bronco Off-Roadeo programme. At select venues across the United States (Nevada, New Hampshire, Tennessee, Texas and Utah), those who have purchased a new Bronco or Bronco Sport, or even those that just want to sample the rig's capabilities, can attend one of these programmes.

We had the opportunity to do just that, visiting the Bronco Off-Roadeo sites in Nevada and Moab, Utah. Billed as the "greatest experience on dirt", the Off-Roadeo begins with attendees convening at the base camp. There an overview of the adventure is presented, highlighting what's in store as well as the customary signing of a waiver by those taking part (this is America after all). Then, once the group is all signed up and

Expert trail guides and travelling in a group provides a real sense of camaraderie.

Bronco Off-Roadeo: how it works

There are different programmes and packages available for Bronco Off-Roadeo. For those that purchase a new Bronco, Bronco Sport or Bronco Raptor, owner experiences are available at various Off-Roadeo locations.

In order to qualify for these, you currently must own a 2024 or newer model Bronco, Bronco Sport or Bronco Raptor and must be a resident of the United States or Canada.

The other option, which is available to everyone, is the Off-Roadeo Half Day Adventure. Offered at the New Hampshire, Utah, Nevada, Tennessee and Texas locations, you will need to be at least 18 years old and have a valid driving licence to make a reservation.

Up to three guests are allowed with passengers required to be at least 12 years old. Each registrant is provided the use of a new Bronco for the event, and expert trail guides will lead the group, communicating by two-way radio during the course of the event. It's an exciting experience and one that's highly recommended.

For more details visit broncooffroadeo.com

During the event, you get the opportunity to take in some amazing vistas.

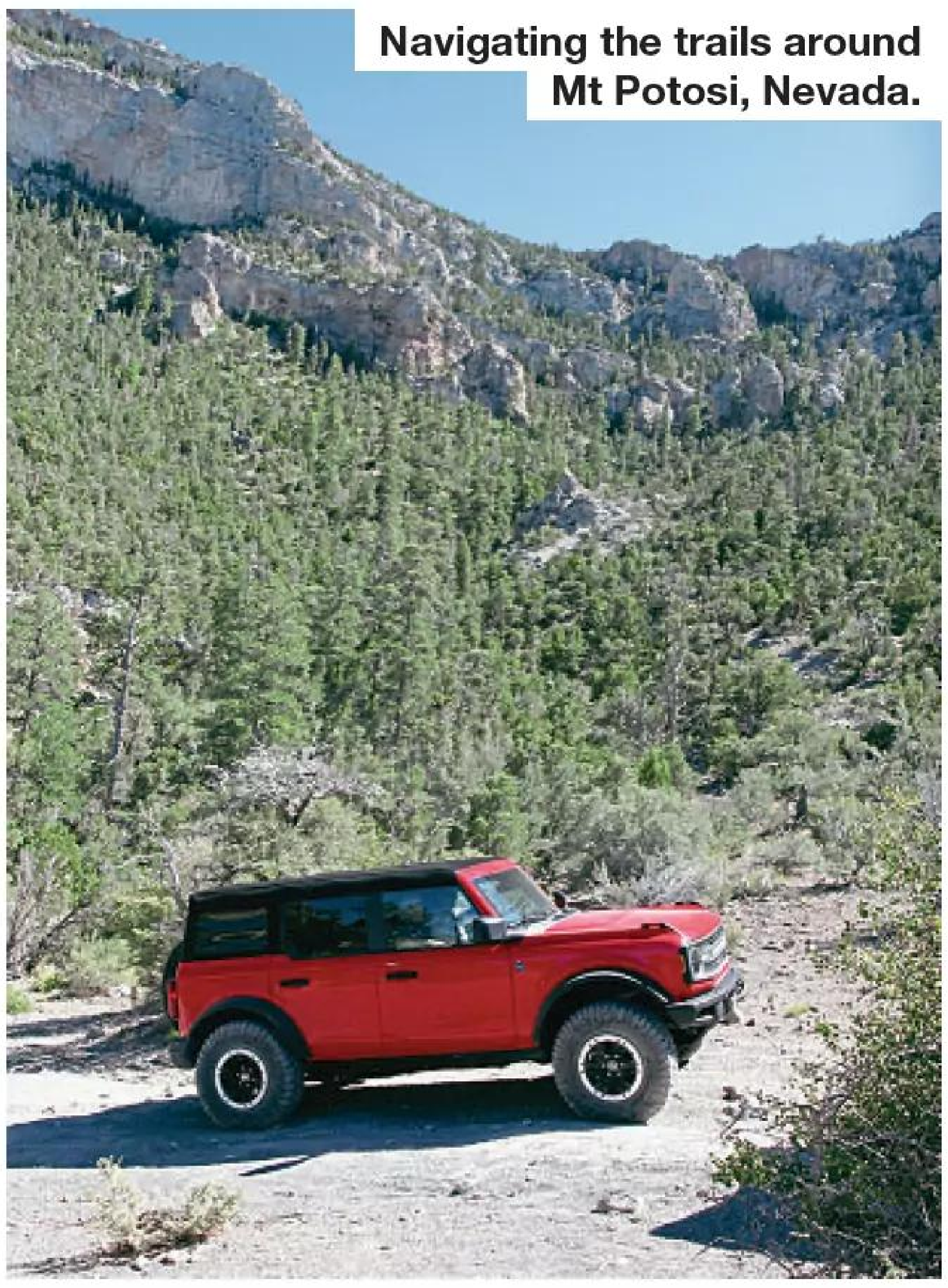
accounted for, they are given a Bronco to drive for the course of the event. Depending on which venue you attend to take part in the Off-Roadeo, you may drive a short distance on road or immediately take to the trails.

Throughout your journey you are led by highly experienced trail guides who know the country like the back of their hand. Before heading out into the boonies, tyre pressures are lowered and the adventure begins.

A key part of the Bronco's off-road capability lies with the SUV's part-time, true four-wheel drive (with high and low range) and what's called the GOAT system (goes over any terrain). This is operated by a rotary dial on the centre console and allows the driver to select a specific setting depending on the terrain you're travelling on. These include Eco, Baja, Normal (the default mode), Mud/Ruts, Sand/Snow and Rock Crawl.

Depending on the Bronco you're driving, you also have the opportunity to electronically disconnect the front sway bar, and once engaged in low range, have the ability to lock both the front and rear differentials. This proves particularly handy when you're navigating through steep trails and need that extra »

Make no mistake, these are some serious trails.



Navigating the trails around Mt Potosi, Nevada.

Rugged and ready for action.

traction to get out of gulleys and up rocky or slippery slopes.

Highly capable

The beauty of taking part in the Off-Roadeo is that you really get to experience the Bronco's capabilities, and what this rig can do is mightily impressive.

It will go over almost anything and responds well to steady steering and throttle inputs. Big tyres with sturdy sidewalls, good ground clearance and short front and rear overhangs are a big benefit.

The torque from the four-cylinder and V6 engines is more than adequate for just about any incline and Trail Control and Hill Descent Control makes navigating steep downhill stretches straightforward and reassuring. While some of the trails we tackled were strewn with rocks and boulders, the Bronco still does an admirable job at cushioning its occupants. We did similar off-roading in an old, lifted Jeep Wrangler the previous year, and the difference in piloting the two vehicles (in comfort terms at least) was night and day.

What's great about the Off-Roadeo is that even if you're a novice to four-wheeling, you have expert guidance throughout the event, which really allows you to build your confidence and properly explore the Ford SUV's capabilities.

We had a great time, and not only did we get to really experience the new Bronco in a way a test drive never would, we also got to meet new friends and take in some incredible vistas along the way. ★

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1971 Cadillac Calais Coupe $19,500

Amazing condition throughout, 35,000 genuine miles, interior is like new, not to be confused with the normal offered for sale examples.

1964 Ford F100 $6750

Super solid throughout, rare automatic, 6 cylinder, runs and drives, always a California truck, arriving soon (library pic but truck is almost identical).

1972 Buick Skylark Sun Coupe $ Ask

Pretty rare car, 32,000 original miles, 100 percent rust free car, gold with white interior, won't dissapoint.

1968 Ford F100 4x4 $11,500

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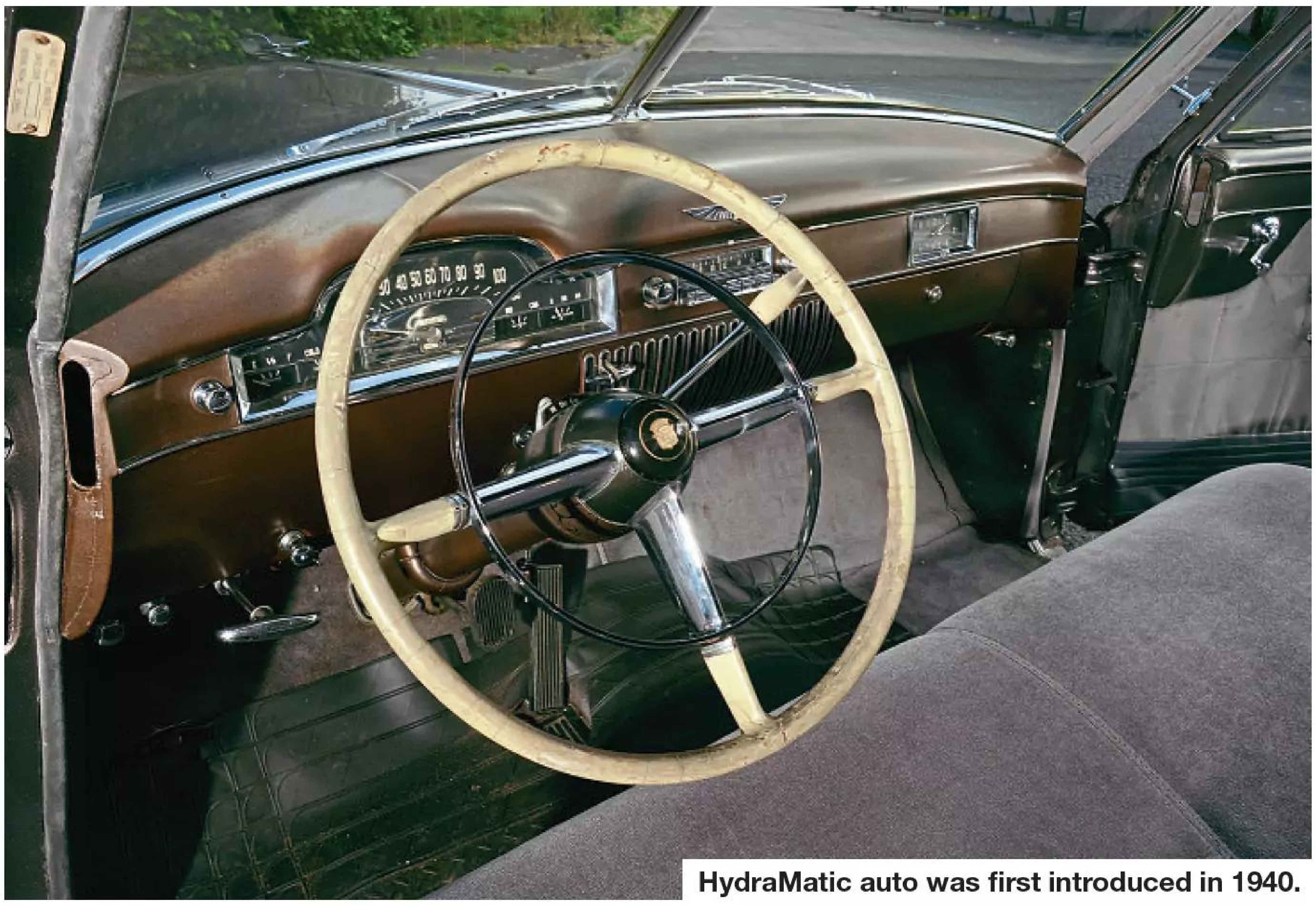
Postwar perfection

Despite his love for fast Fords, Japanese performance and classic British cars, Ash Patel always had a burning desire to own an imposing postwar automobile from the States. This stunning, rare 1949 Cadillac Series 62 fitted his criteria perfectly, though it did require a little work...

Words and photography: Jon Cass

1949 CADILLAC
999 WDN
999WEDDINGCARS



HydraMatic auto was first introduced in 1940.

You'll see this hood ornament on buses and taxis across the world!

Like so many of us, Ash Patel became a diehard petrolhead from an early age. "I didn't come from a car loving family, we weren't particularly interested in cars, but my neighbours were," he smiles. "I'd regularly see them tinkering with their Ford Cortinas and Escorts on their driveway and this always fascinated me." Those same neighbours happened to have a son of a similar age to Ash, they'd become best friends and soon the pair would become involved in fixing old Fords too.

"My first car after I passed my test was a K10 Nissan Micra, as it seemed a sensible choice at the time," Ash recalls. "By the time I was 19 I had a 1994 XR2i, and shortly after, a 93 Sierra Sapphire Cosworth 4x4. For my 21st birthday I treated myself to a highly desirable 1987 three-door Cosworth followed by a 1998 Mitsubishi Evo 5." To some onlookers it might seem as if Ash had quickly achieved the pinnacle of exotic car ownership, yet he was still only in his 20s. However, as happy as he was, Ash felt there was still something significant missing in his life, or should that be in his garage?

"From the age of eight, I'd always had a fascination for 1950s Americana - the lifestyle, the music, the cars, the whole Hollywood glitz," Ash explains. "It all started while I was cleaning paint pots at junior school, and Rock around the Clock by Bill Haley and the Comets suddenly piped up on the teacher's radio!" The tune struck a deep chord with Ash, who incidentally discovered the name of the band thanks to his teacher, Alison Pearce.

"I began to research all things from 50s America," he says, "and being a petrolhead that had to include the iconic cars from that era too – they give such a beautiful insight into the fabulous 50s! A bygone era of automobile fashion which included the bench seats, the chrome, the vast size and their harmonic V8 soundtrack." The fast Fords and Evo may have taken centre stage in Ash's life during his teenage years and for a decade or so more, but that desire to one day own an American car from the golden era always remained strong. "Once I'd reached my late 30s, I felt the timing was right," he recalls. "I started trawling through the online ads to see which cars were available."

As the styling cues of American automobiles changed dramatically throughout the 1950s, Ash set his sights on an early sedan, preferably with the trademark coffin nose and no fins.

"I discovered there weren't that many original cars available that fitted my criteria," he remembers, "but then a 1949 Cadillac Sedan Series 62 stood out." Just missing Ash's preference of a 1950s car by a mere matter of months, this car appeared to tick all the boxes. "Then to my horror, the classified ad it suddenly disappeared and I thought I'd missed my chance," he continues. "Fortunately the ad reappeared after a month or so."

Luck be a lady

Not one to miss a second opportunity, Ash quickly contacted the vendor, located in Chesham, Buckinghamshire. "I was so keen not to miss out on the car, I bought it unseen," he says. "I was also advised to wait a few days due to an imminent incoming storm before trailering it home." Taking this good advice, Ash left it until the next day before embarking on a long drive to Chesham. "Luckily, the weather was spot on by then, the last thing I wanted was a three-tonne Yank tank coming off the trailer bed!"

Ash was not to be disappointed with his new purchase and began to delve into this highly original Cadillac's past. "Going through the paperwork, I could only find two previous keepers named Kenny and Andy Dreher, both in New York," Ash tells us. "In 2014 the Cadillac was shipped from NYC to a David Scott in London." Despite the lack of early US history, Ash was pleased to find this was a numbers-matching car, still wearing its original colour of Avalon Grey.

"Compared to other cars I'd driven, this was a totally different beast, but what a beast!" Ash smiles. "The wayward handling, the brakes, and sheer size of the car plus the onlookers, it all took a lot of getting used to, but I can relax more when driving it now, I feel more confident in waving back and smiling at passing cars," he laughs.

When Ash purchased the Cadillac, he found it had actually had four previous owners. Unfortunately, the third owner, who happened to be a friend of the vendor, kept the car under a tarpaulin inside a greenhouse for a year and this hadn't done the paintwork or interior any favours.

With a goal of restoring the Cadillac to its former glory, Ash began to contact local owners of American cars who were established within the show scene. "They were very helpful and put me in touch with a few local specialists," Ash says. "Before long I was having a long discussion with Wakefield-based Mick Hirst as to which approach I should take with the Cadillac."

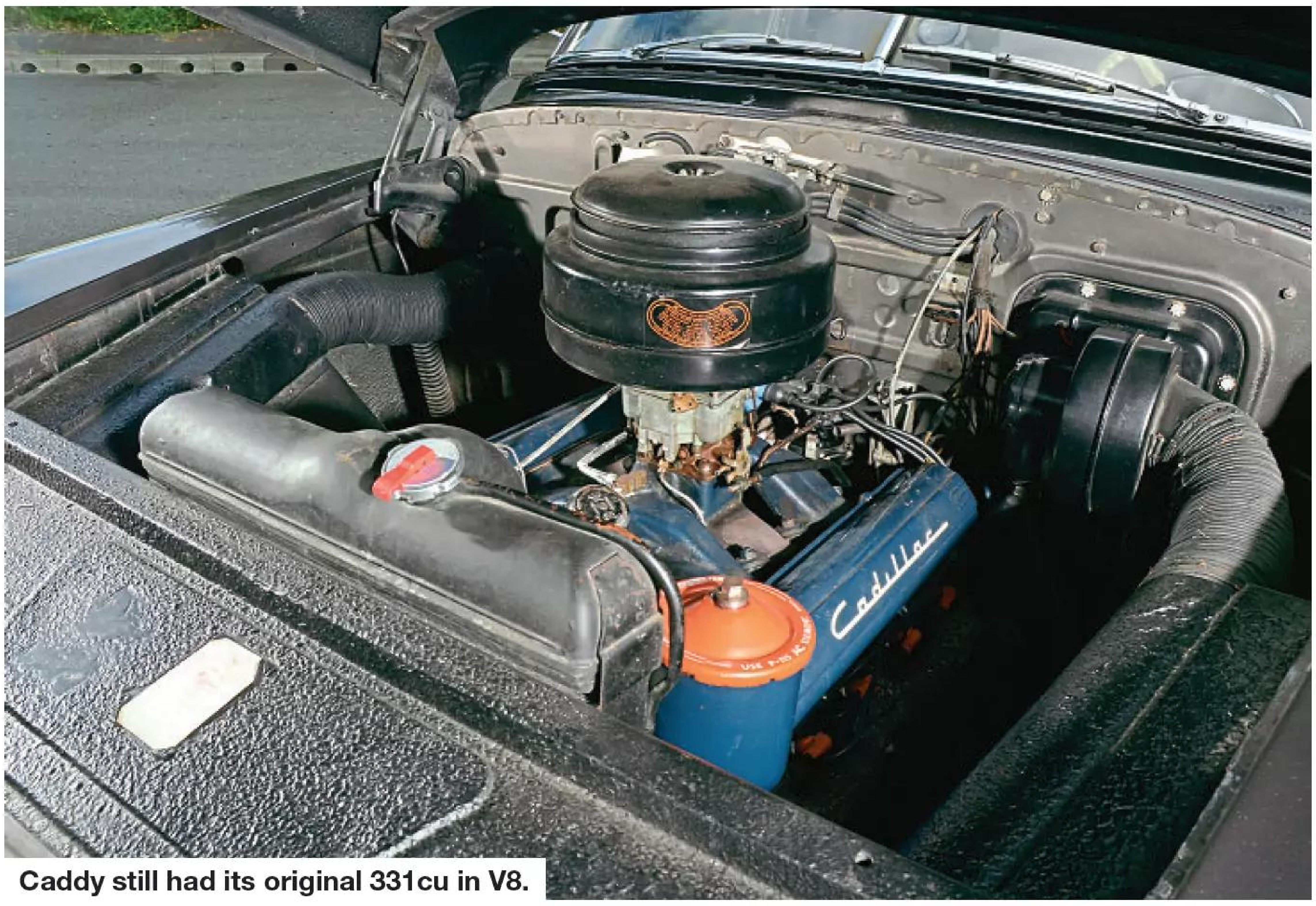
Initially, Mick suggested stripping the chrome work in order to find the extent of hidden rust. "Other than a few surface patches of corrosion, the only rust that required a major repair was located around the front wheel arches, behind the gravel guards. Mick was able to cut out the offending rust and welded in new metal." Already stripped of its chrome work, a decision was made to sand down the remainder of the shell and apply a fresh coat of metallic Avalon Grey. "It's not the exact factory shade," Ash points out. "I was keen to incorporate a slightly less brown tint than the factory colour, with greyer to compensate, resulting in a custom mix, although it is a pretty close match."

As you'd expect, the Cadillac's interior had also suffered a little during its time spent in a greenhouse too, especially when it came to the door cards and boot carpet. "The original door cards were unsalvageable," Ash says. "I managed to find a local trimmer who was

»

able to supply plush grey velvet material with thicker door cards instead of replicating the original hessian cloth." Thankfully, the seats which had been retrimmed in cloth back in the States at some stage, had survived their greenhouse encounter unscathed, just a thorough clean was needed. "I also had the boot retrimmed at the same time, using a very similar hessian type material," Ash adds.

Incredibly, the Cadillac had managed to keep hold of its original 331cu in/5.4-litre V8 engine, complete with factory carb and four-speed HydraMatic auto transmission. "I knew it would require a tune-up at the very least and opted to take the car to my go-to American car mechanic in this area, Russell Marsden at Halifax Old Road Speedshop in Huddersfield. 'Doctor Cadillac', I call him," he says and, rather than just sort the offending issues, Russell took the time to teach Ash how to maintain a vintage V8 of this era. "Every time I'm at Russell's I learn something new, he's nurturing me as we go along and this is all a learning curve for me," Ash continues. "I know he has my back anytime I may call upon him and that I have his support."


Caddy still had its original 331cu in V8.

Learning curve

While Ash watched and took note, Russell replaced the oil filter, points, condenser and rotor arm and also corrected the timing and gave the engine a full service too. "When Russell is not available I have my other go-to local mechanic that has always been there to help and assist with the old girl, and at times of dire need he's there, and that's Phil at Manor Garage, West Yorkshire (Tel. 01924 469906). Phil has known me since I was 19 and has looked after all my cars – whether it be my weekend toys or everyday workhorses. "I've developed a good relationship with Manor Garage over the years and hope to continue that, as I need old school mechanics for old school cars." Unusually, the old 6v electrics remain in place though this did initially result in a few issues.

"Often, I'd find there just wasn't enough power to crank the engine over with the inadequate big heavy box battery!" Ash says. "I rectified this by installing two 6-volt Optima batteries parallel to each other, thicker gauge battery cables and swapping to a 6-volt alternator which I sourced from France and doing away with the original 6-volt generator."

Yes, it may have been easier in the long run to swap to 12-volt electrics, but Ash was keen to retain some originality here. "It's not like the 6-volt electrics don't work, I mean it worked well in 1949 and it works just as well now 75 years on, but they just weren't quite up to the task – things needed tweaking," Ash says.

Minor cooling issues at first were a straightforward fix, rectified by flushing the radiator, swapping from a 180 thermometer to a 160 and adding a manual auxiliary fan. Meanwhile that Hydramatic transmission received a service, along with a strip down and clean, new seals and fresh oil. Likewise, the suspension and trailing bushes were renewed, and the brake shoes adjusted. "Considering this is almost a three-tonne car, the brakes are

Ash uses his Caddy for his wedding hire business.

1949 CADILLAC
999 WDN
999WEDDINGCARS

Chevy wore similar front styling for '49.

Owner Ash Patel.

amazingly efficient," Ash points out. "You slam down on the brakes and you're almost out the windscreen!"

Fresh whitewall cross-ply tyres complete the classic look and although the Cadillac still wears its original 1949 hub caps, he did manage to track down a spare identical set of four in the UK for just £89 should he ever need them. Prior to the Cadillac's arrival, Ash had been asked by his family if he could supply a car for his nephew's wedding. "I used my 1972 Mk1 Escort I had at the time," he recalls. "I was apprehensive as the weather looked a bit dreary at first, but the day went well, and the car received lots of attention." Predictably, it wasn't long before similar requests appeared for Ash's eye-catching and far more luxurious Cadillac. "Soon, I had a barrage of couples asking if they could use the car," Ash

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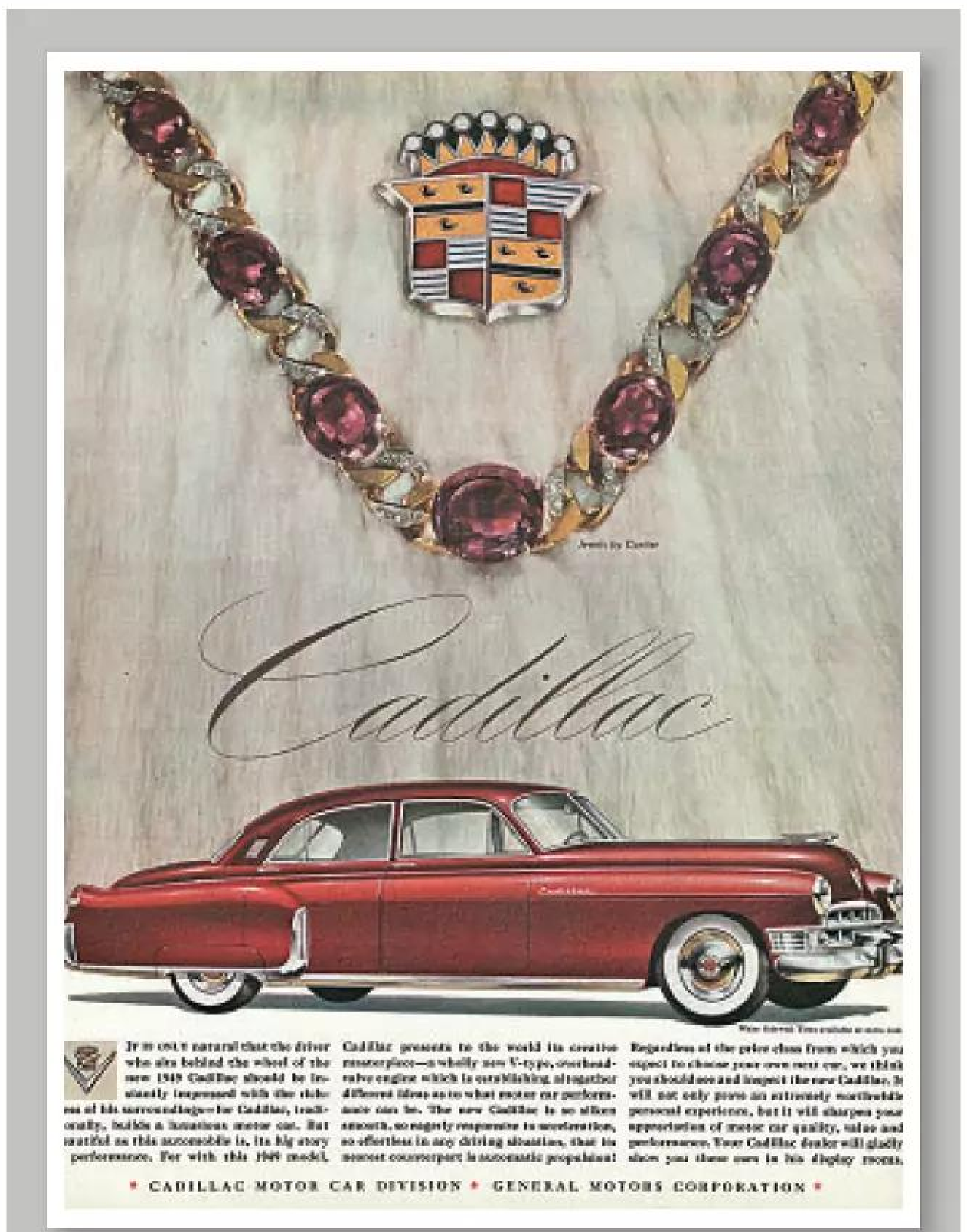
Cadillac
CADILLAC MOTOR CAR DIVISION • GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION

1949 Cadillac Fleetwood Sixty Special Touring.

A Legend is Born

The 331cu OHV V8 producing 160bhp was introduced by Cadillac in 1949. Not only did this new powerplant offer an improvement in power, but it was also lower and shorter than the old flathead V8 and weighed less too. The usual minor trim revisions also took place for '49 with the upmarket series receiving grooved, front fender stone shields and bright rocker panel mouldings, though the previous chevrons below the tail-lights were no longer to be seen. Incidentally, a heater was still optional! Sales figures for the Series 62 reached a record 55,643 that year from a total volume of 92,554 vehicles.

New tyres completed the Caddy's revival.

smiles. "All this was a clear business opportunity, and I decided to establish 999 Wedding Cars."

Over the last few years, Ash and his Cadillac have now served more than 30 weddings with plenty more on the horizon. "The brogues, the hat, the pinstripe suit are all me down to a tee," Ash continues. "When I'm driving at an event I dress accordingly to the era, as you've got to feel part of it – but not too much as I don't bring the deactivated Thompson aka tommy gun inside a violin case to weddings!" In fact, such is the popularity of the Cadillac in its new working role, Ash has decided to add another American classic to his fleet in the shape of a 1940s convertible, so we may not have heard the last from him yet. "I'm hoping for a dry summer where the open top configuration will come in handy," he says. Ash may still enjoy driving his Evo, but it would seem he's now just as passionate when it comes to old American cars too. And it's quite possibly all because Bill Haley and the Comets just happened to be playing on the radio at the right time on the right day! ★

Caddy's seats survived the ordeal of greenhouse storage!

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General Motors

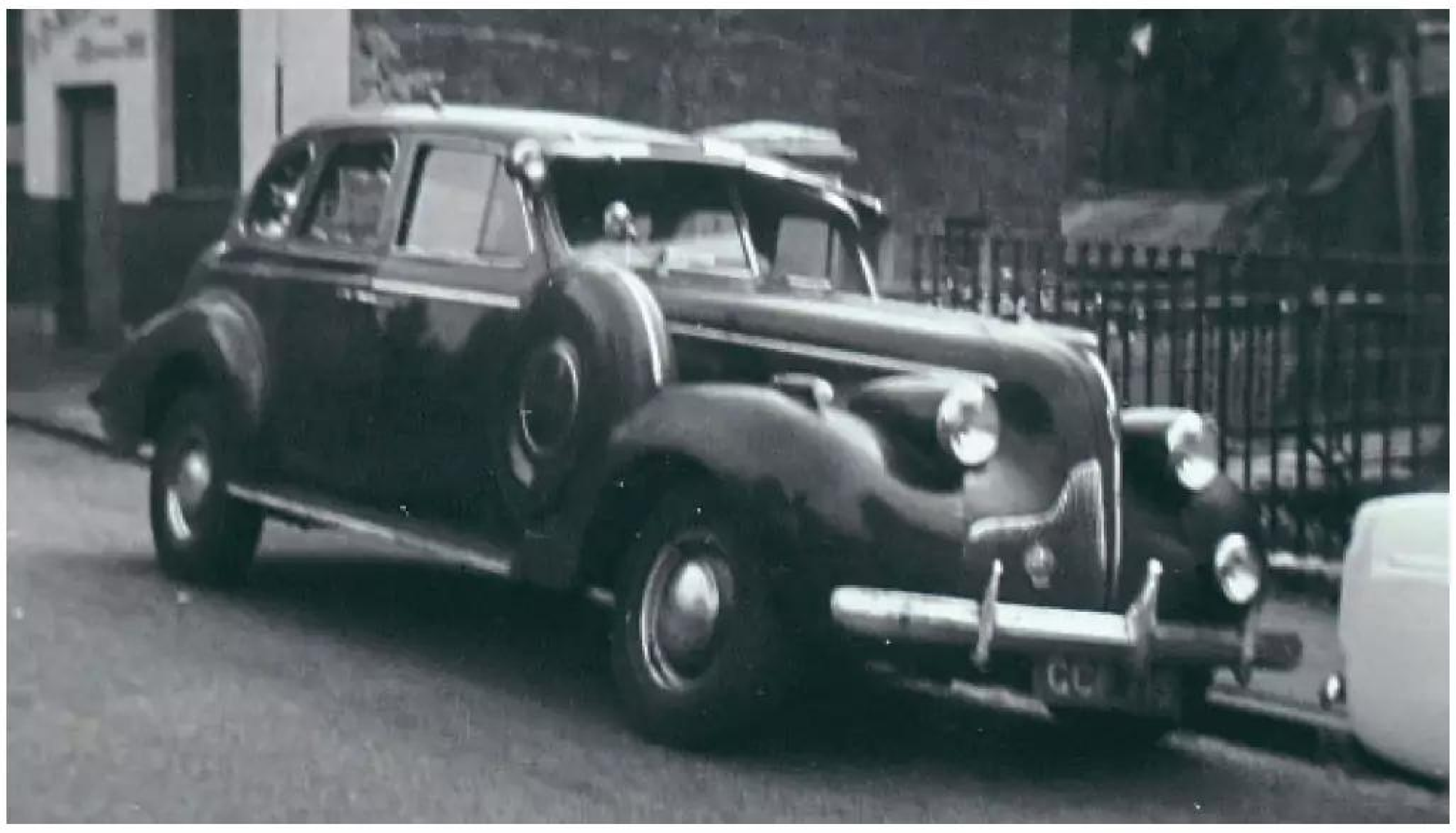
Last month, we looked at the Fords, Lincolns and Mercurys encountered by the young schoolfriends Allan Bedford and Barry Magness as they travelled around London and Kent. We turn our attention now to the General Motors products they discovered. With Lendrum & Hartman (sole concessionaires for Buick and Cadillac) and Pass & Joyce (for Chevrolet, pre-war) doing a roaring trade in London, there were plenty of the General's products to be seen.

Words: Zack Stiling **Photography:** Allan Bedford and Barry Magness

1939 Buick Eight

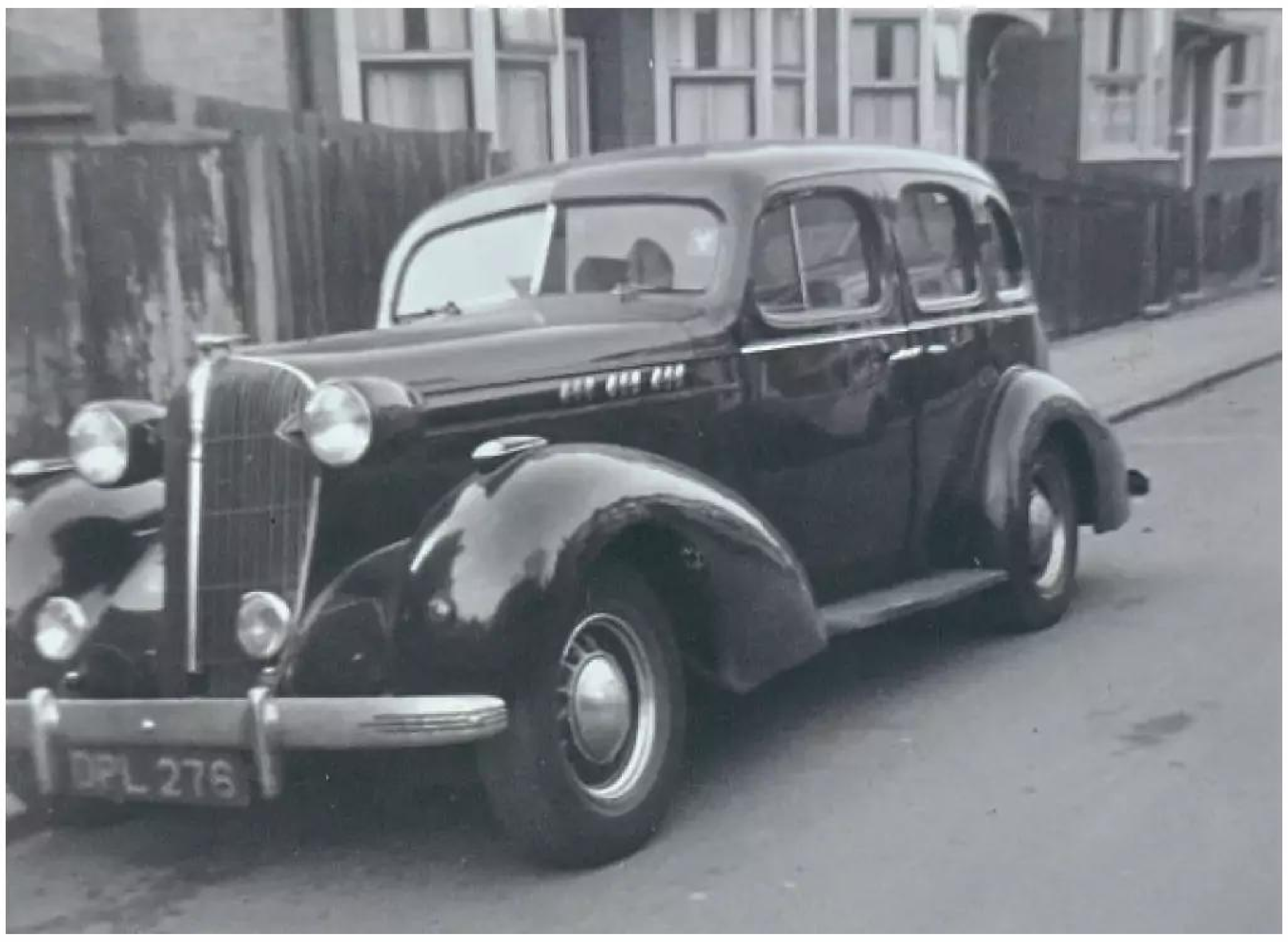
This handsome 1939 Buick Eight demonstrates the shark-nose styling which was all the rage across Detroit for '39. We can say with almost total certainty that this would be a McLaughlin-Buick; the name given to all Buicks built in Canada including those made in right-hand drive for export. The Series 40 Special four-door touring sedan accounted for more than half of Detroit's 1939 Buick production, so we suspect that's what we see here.

It was captured in Charlton in 1961 and, if the author may interject, I can recall seeing a similar '39 Buick sedan on a driveway in Charlton or Woolwich in very recent years. There exists a wartime photograph of GGF 715 at the head of a row of '39 Buicks outside Lendrum & Hartman, all in blackout paint and bearing roof-mounted 'Surgical Unit' signs.



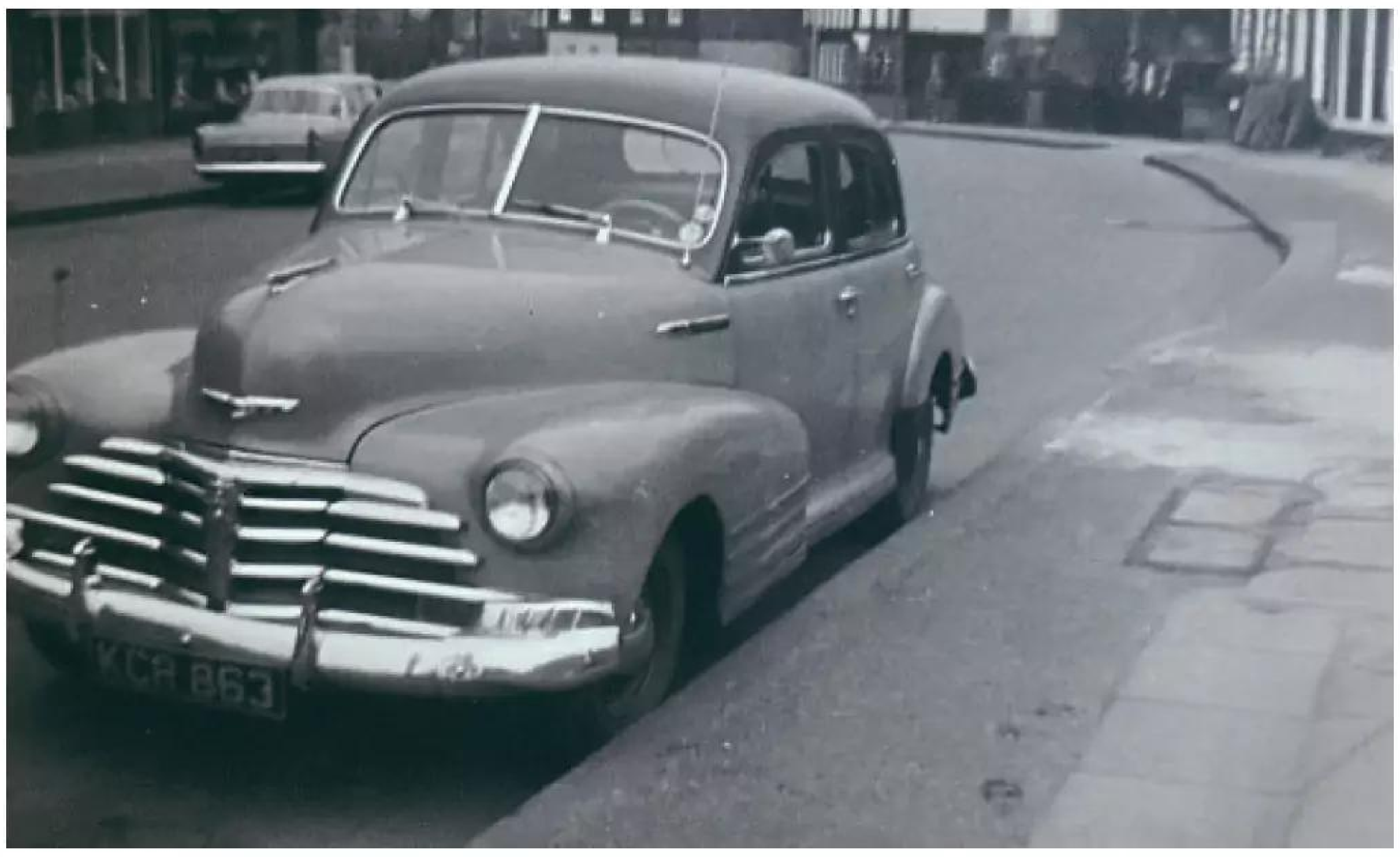
1937 Oldsmobile

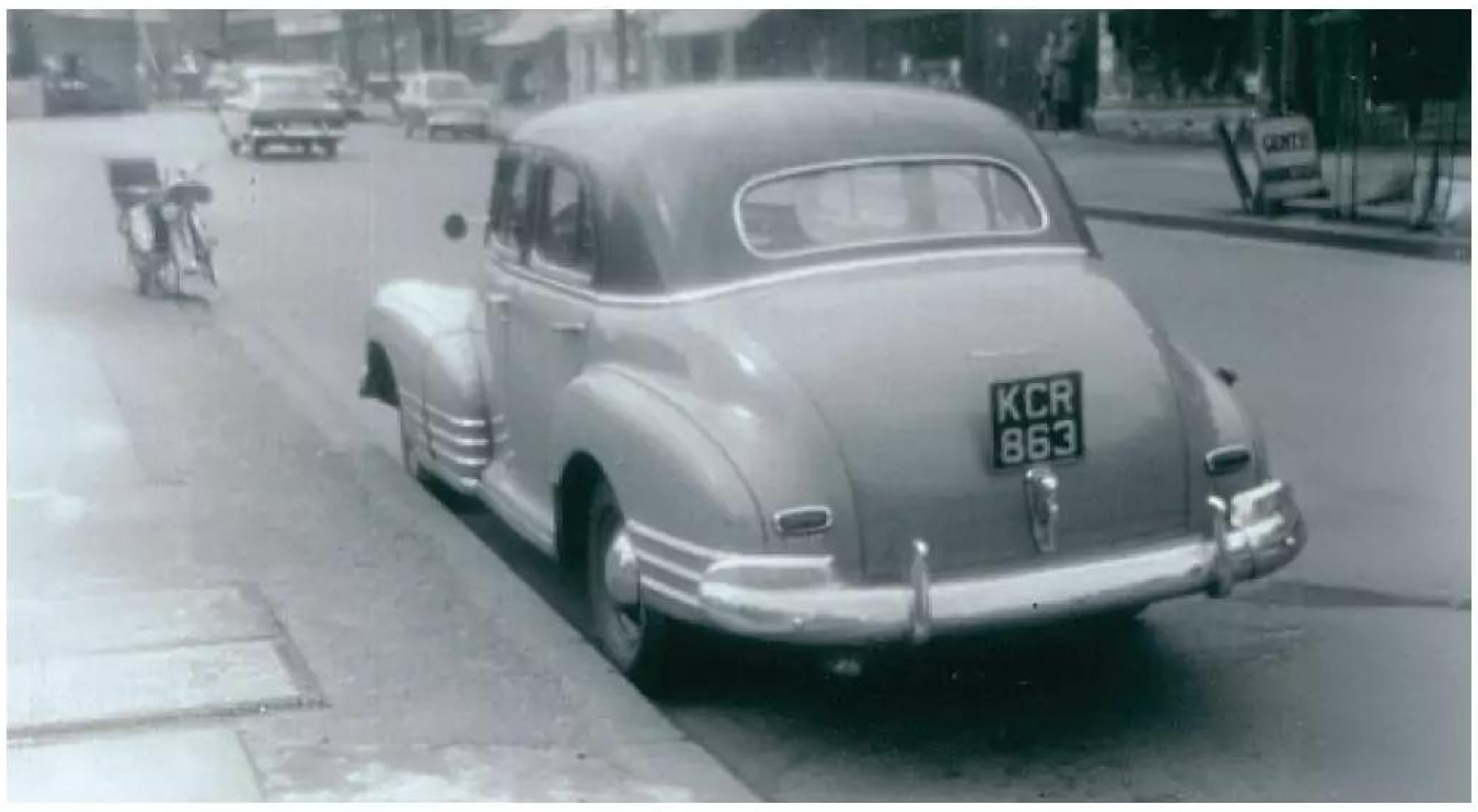
Captured in Bromley in 1962, this 1937 Oldsmobile still possessed a healthy shine. This car was known to the DVLA as recently as 1983, so perhaps it still exists.



1948 Chevrolet

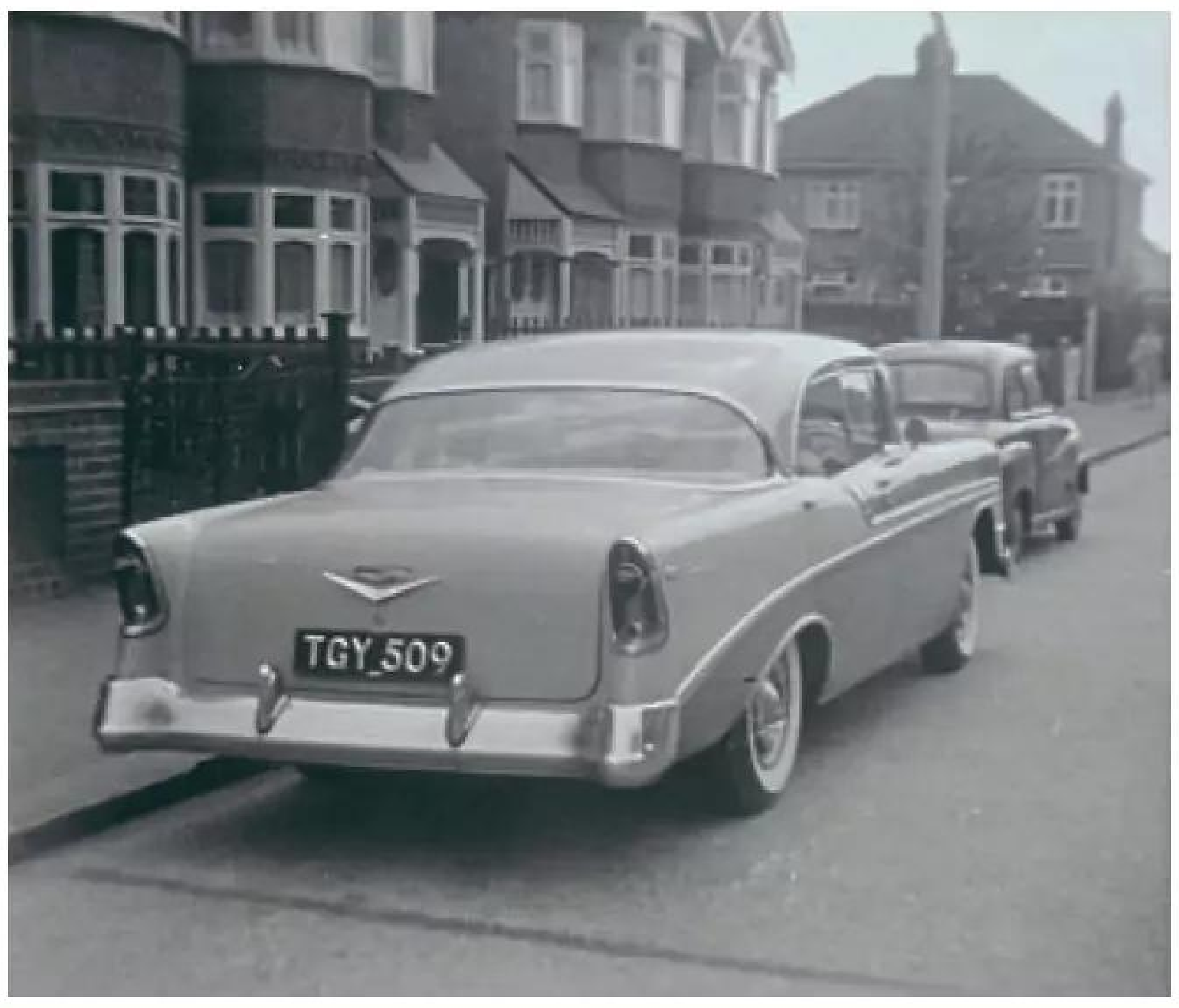
Venturing a mile or two outside of Bromley, to Hayes, Allan found this shapely two-tone green 1948 Chevrolet Fleetline Sportmaster parked by the parade of shops opposite the George Inn. The Fleetline was Chevy's range-topper in 1948, and the Sportmaster name was used exclusively for the four-door sedan.





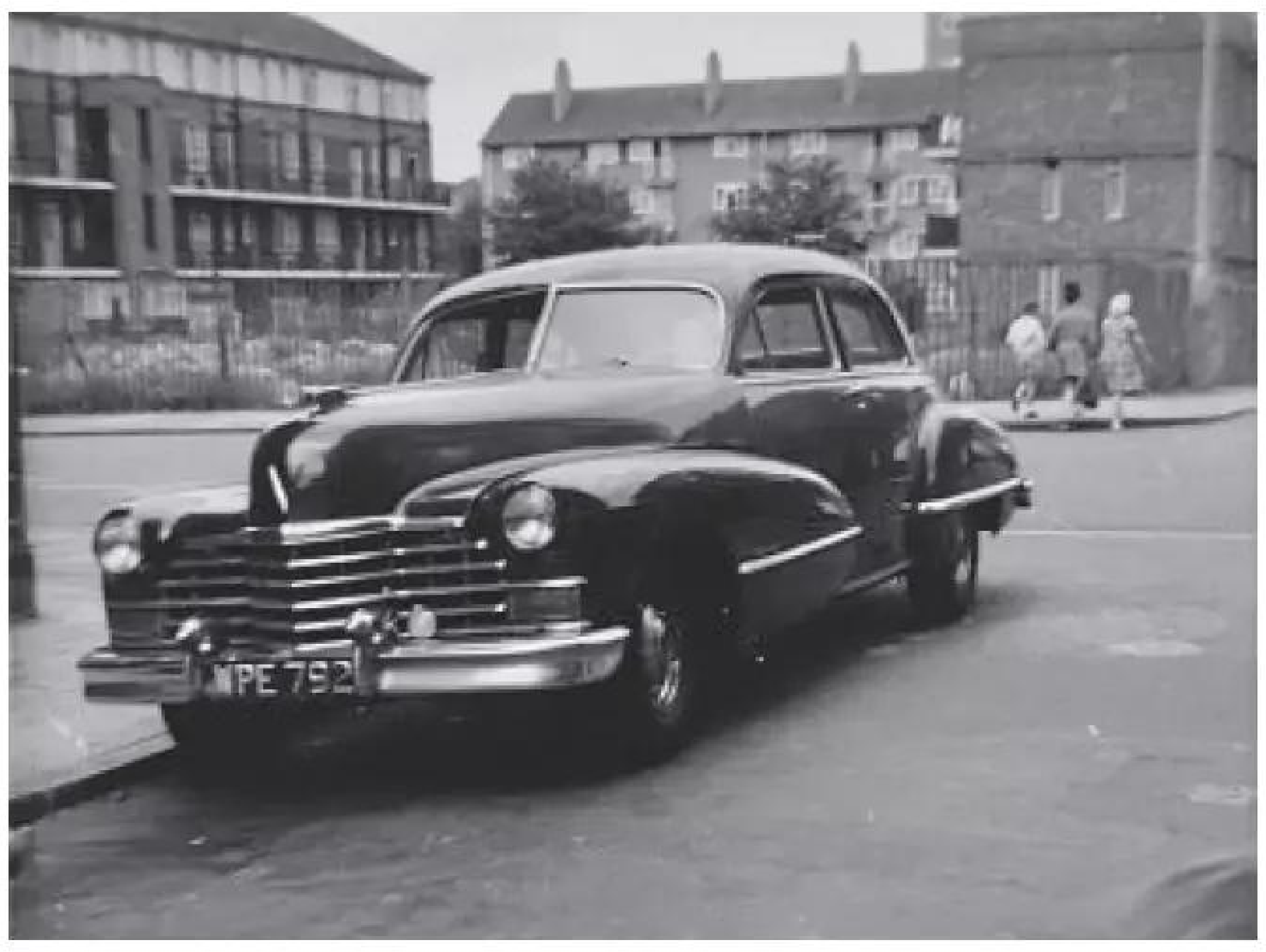
1956 Chevrolet

This '56 Chevy Bel Air Sport hardtop sedan must have looked otherworldly on the streets of Romford in 1963. Any '56 Chevy could be optioned with a 225bhp V8; the Austin A35 parked in front could only muster 34bhp…



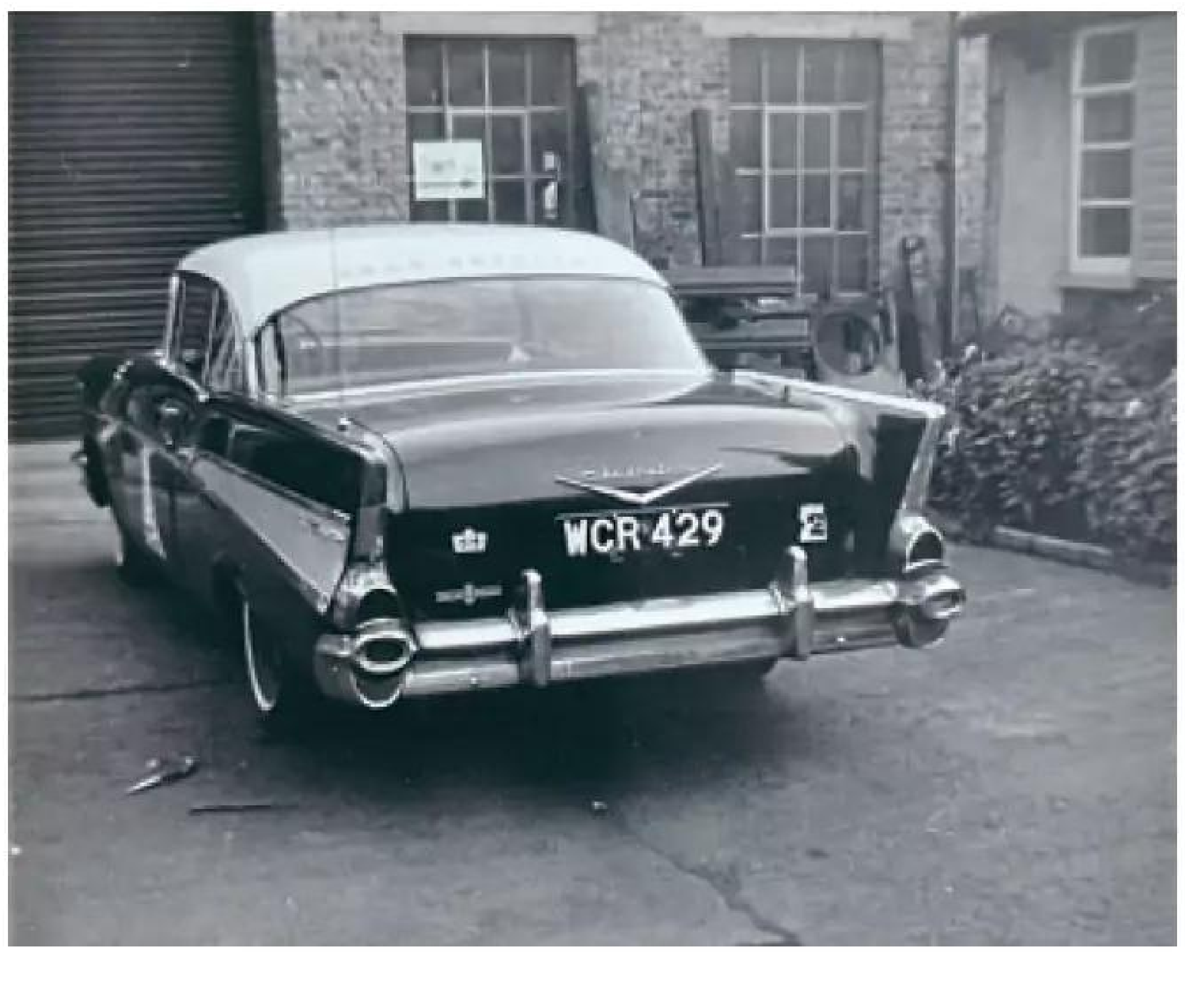
1946 Cadillac

Just like the Lincoln seen in Plumstead last month, here again we have one of America's most expensive cars in one of London's poorest areas. Going by production figures, this 1946 Cadillac four-door sedan is most likely a Series 62, the most numerous of the '46 Caddies, with 14,900 sedans produced. The council blocks are typical of Bermondsey, and the whole scene is reminiscent of the documentary We Are the Lambeth Boys, released five years previously in 1959.



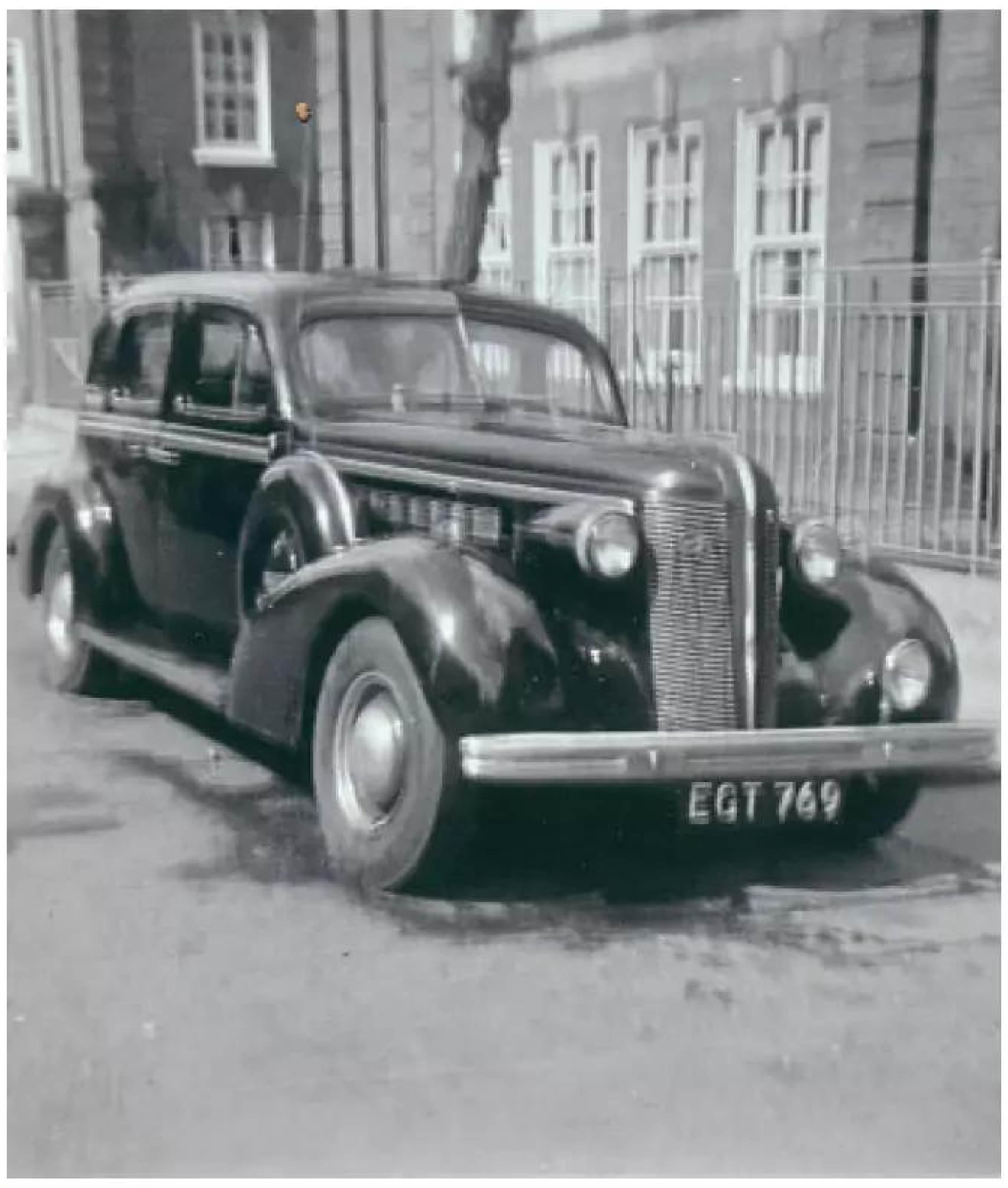
1957 Chevrolet Bel Air

Like the '56 seen earlier, this Southampton-registered 1957 Bel Air Sport hardtop would have been a real sight to behold on British streets. The owner, we believe, was prominent early hot-rodder John Bennett, and it was seen outside Spa Engineering in South Norwood, about which we will hear more when we look in closer detail at the BHRA. This car has a BHRA window sticker, and stickers on the roof spell out 'Drag Festival'. We can also see the original American dealer badge, but it's difficult to make out – it may be Weston Motors.



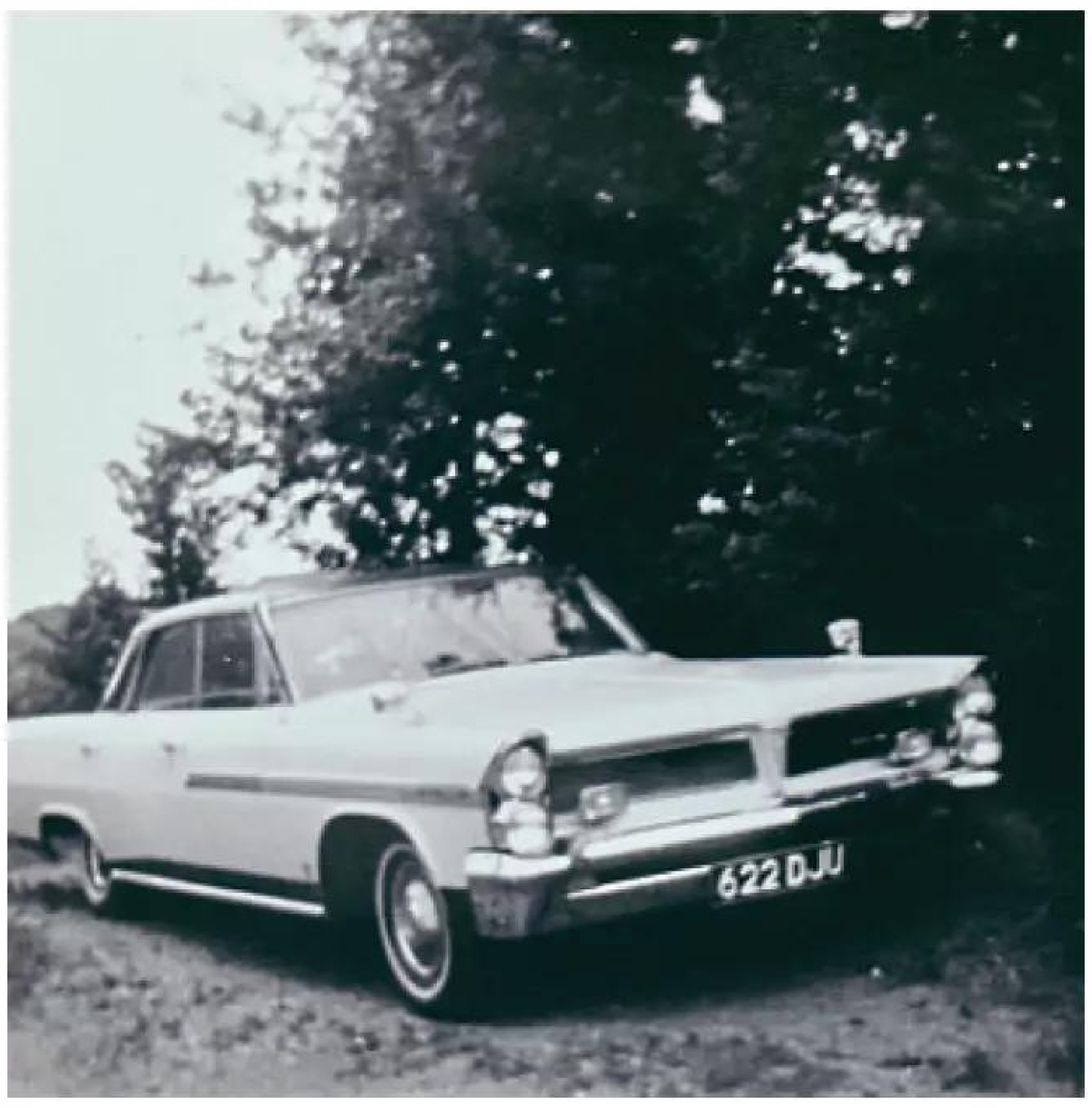
1937 Buick Eight

Buick's styling in 1937 was spot on – the bullet-shaped lights and tapering grille made it look like it was always powering forwards. This McLaughlin-Buick Eight will doubtless have prompted many a 1960s schoolboy to imagine himself inside a gangster film, and cinema enthusiasts will remember that a '37 McLaughlin-Buick roadster served as the villains' car in a chase scene in 1953's The Blue Lamp.



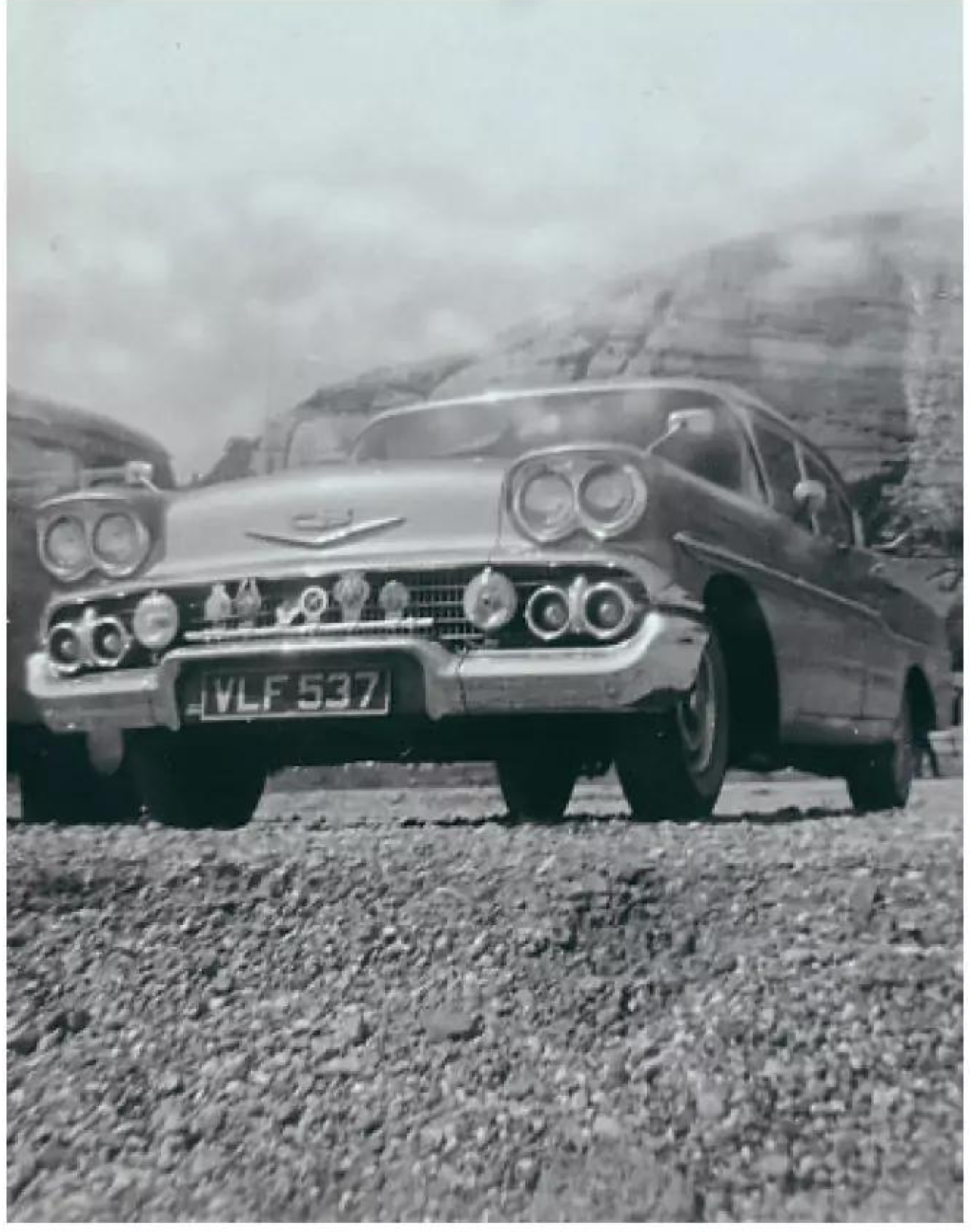
1963 Pontiac Bonneville

This 1963 Pontiac Bonneville Vista sedan carries a Leicestershire number plate. The Bonneville was top of the Pontiac line, while Vista was the name given to all its hardtop sedans. If this was seen in London, it would have been a thirsty drive from Leicestershire for the 389cu in V8.



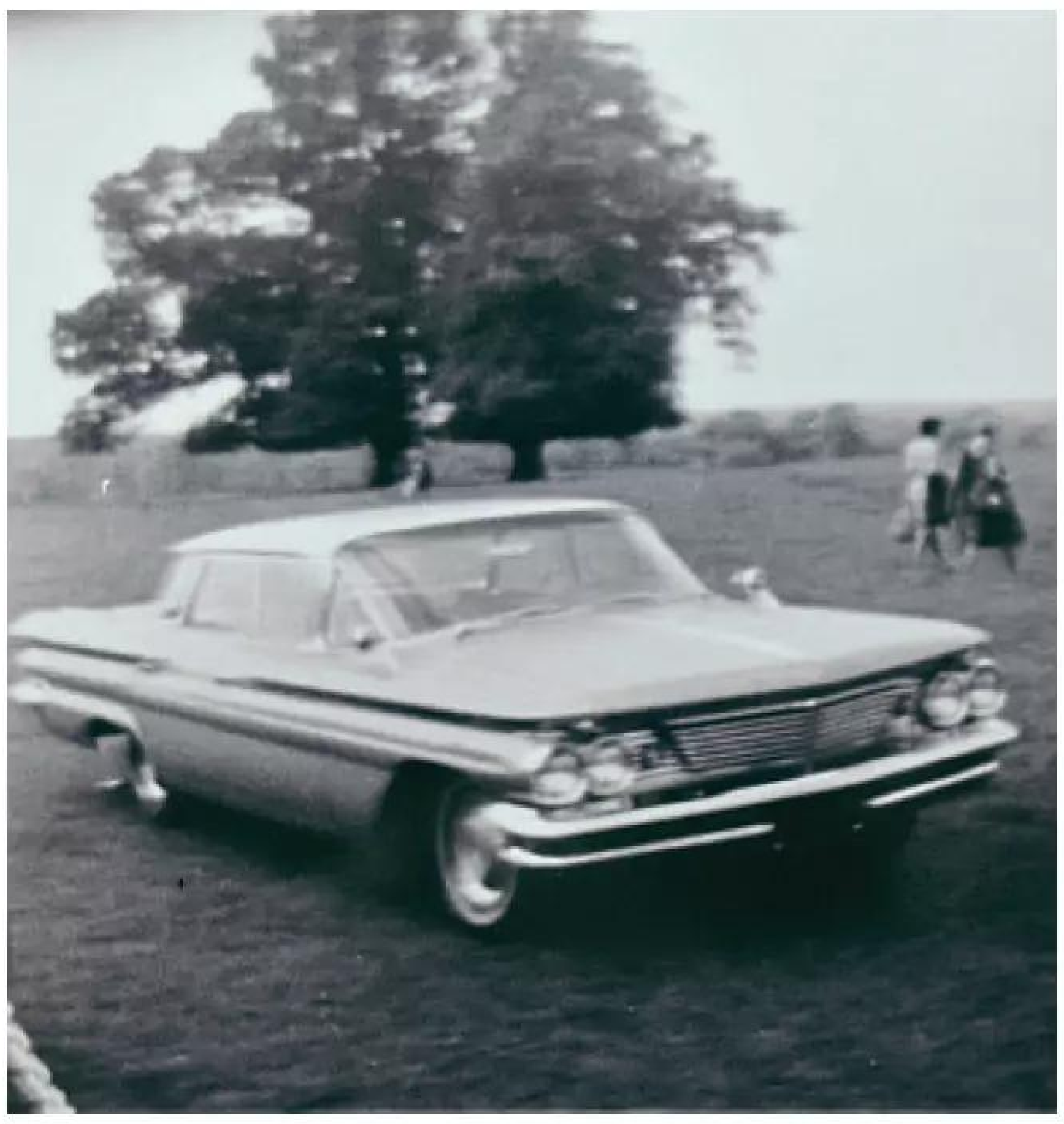
1958 Chevrolet

A daytrip to Hastings introduced Allan to this beautiful 1958 Chevrolet Biscayne four-door sedan. The well-stocked badge bar suggests the owner was something of a motoring enthusiast.



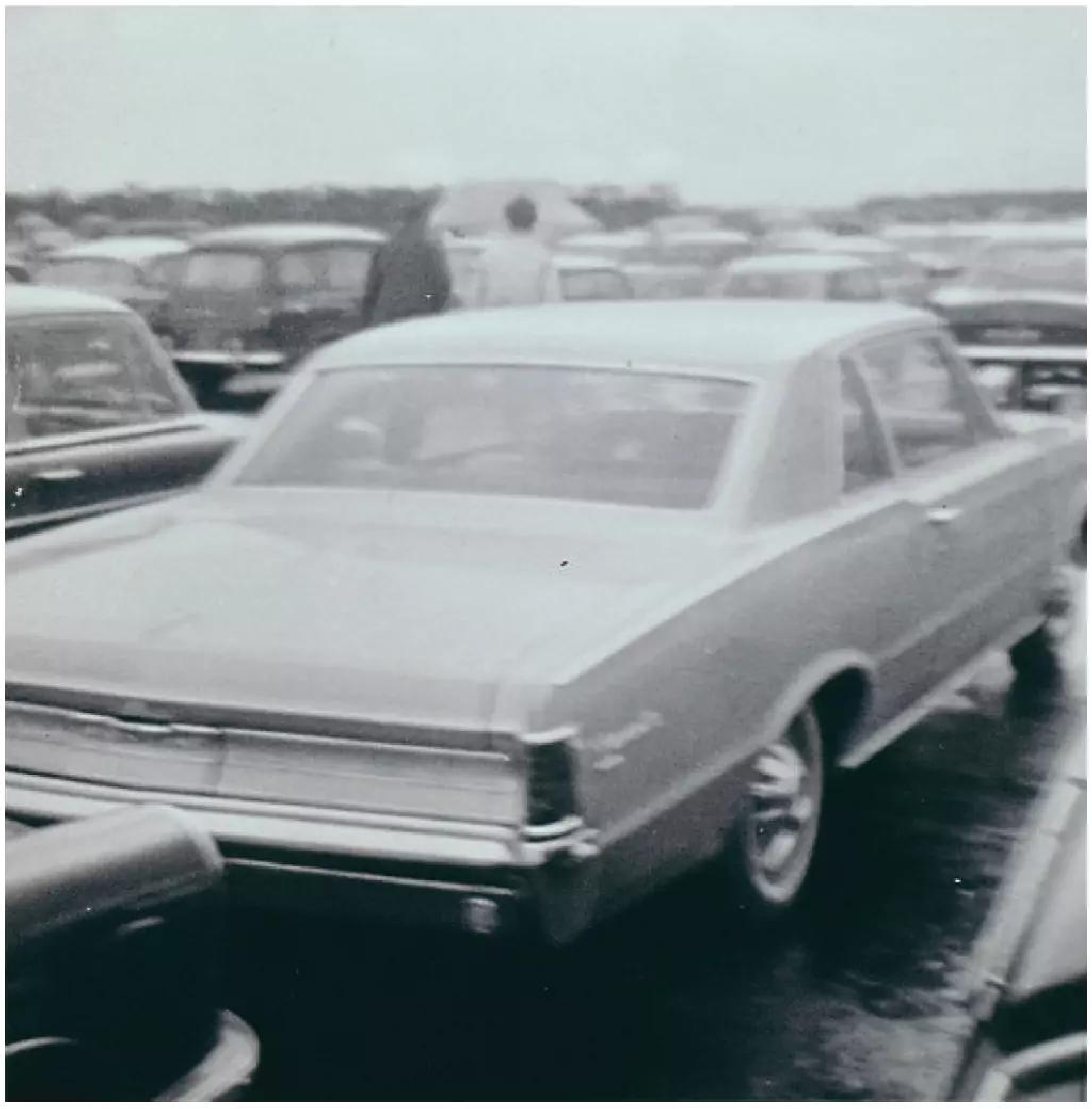
1960 Pontiac

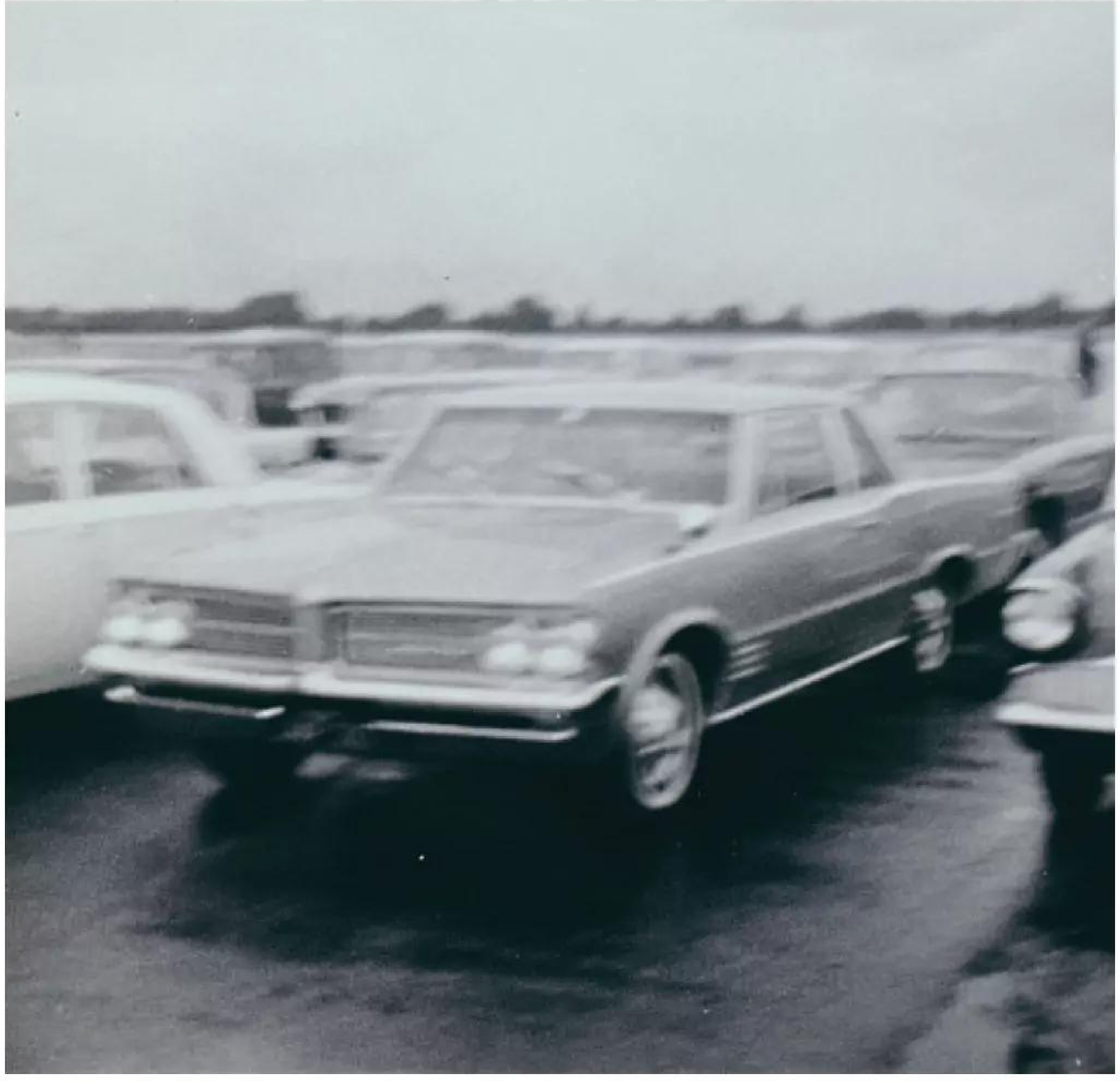
The 'C' registration of this 1960 Pontiac indicates that it landed on British roads in 1965. This also sports the Vista hardtop body and, from what we can make out of the side trim, we think it's another Bonneville. An old gatehouse in the background suggests the location is the car park of a stately home.



1964 Pontiac

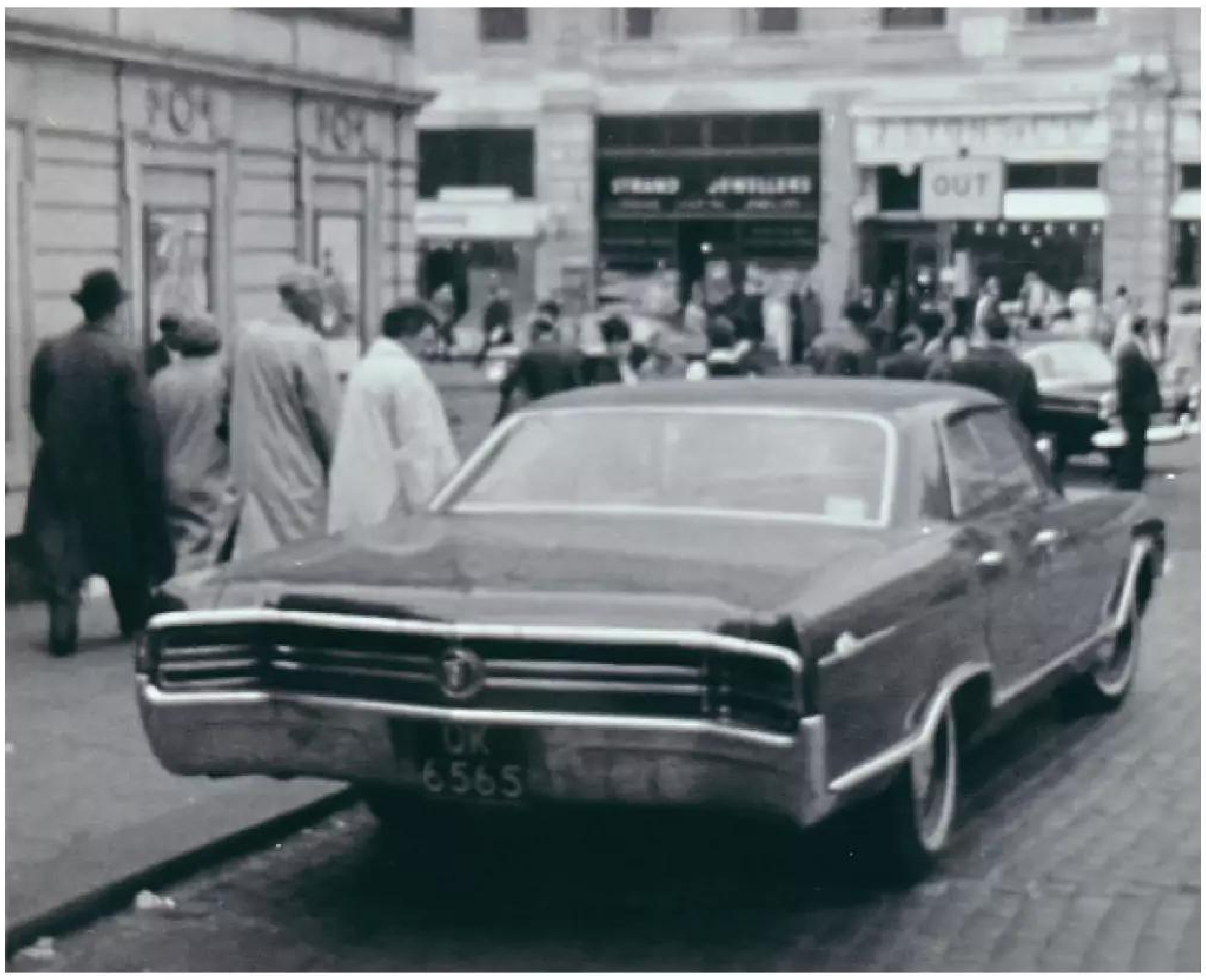
After the big Bonnevilles, Allan stumbled upon the baby of the Pontiac range. Seen in a crowded car park, it's a Tempest coupe from 1964.

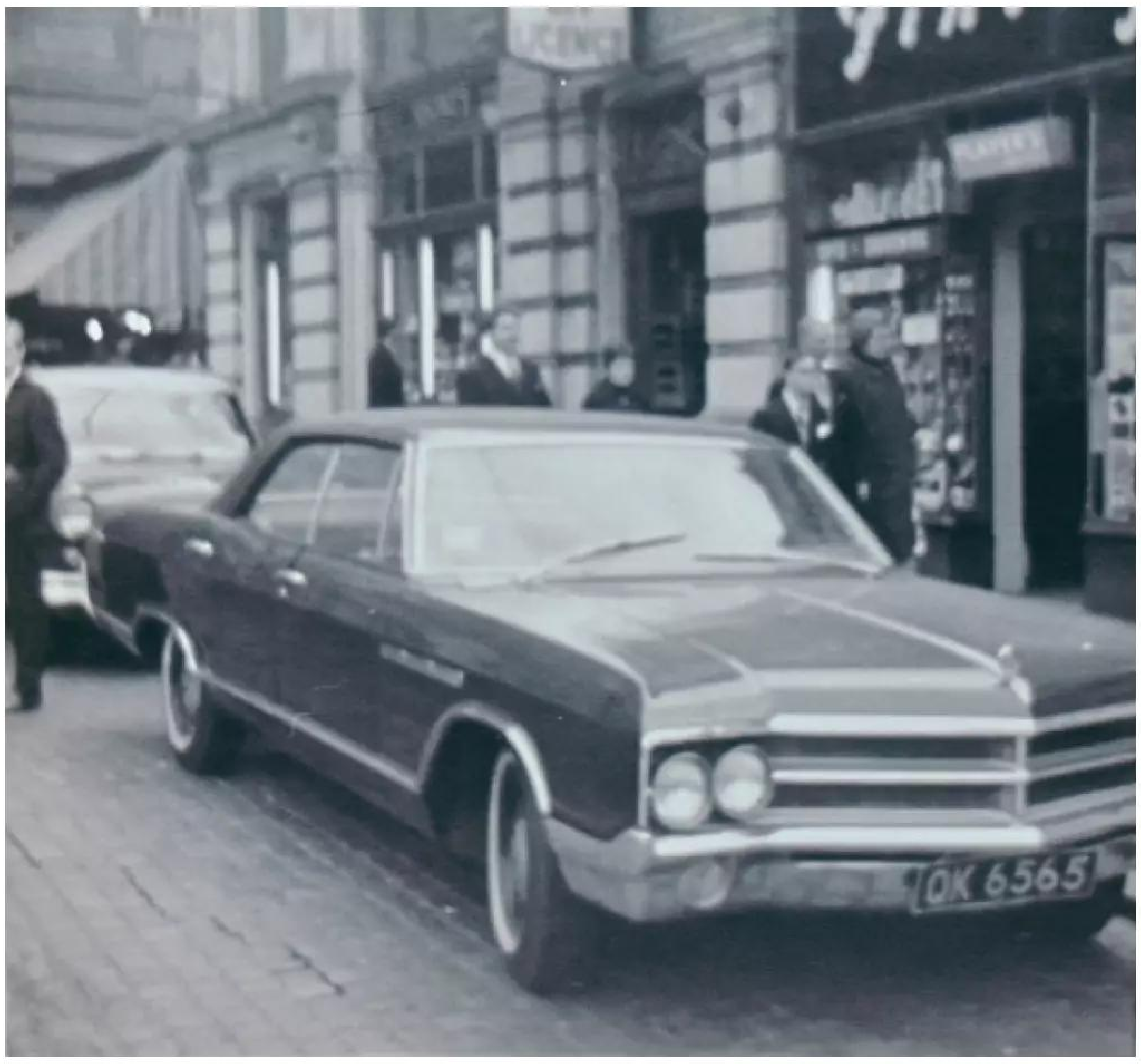




1965 Buick

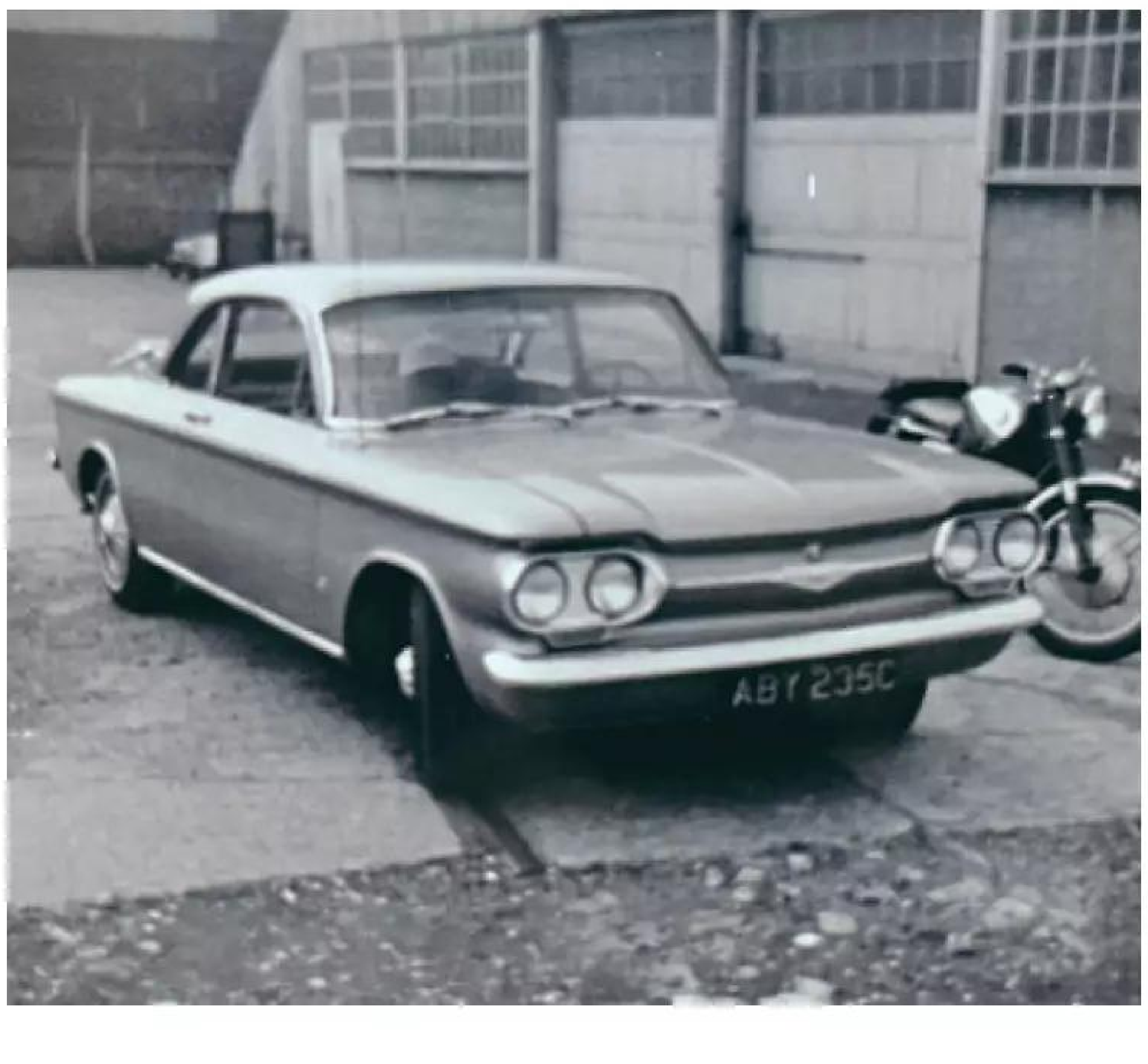
Clearly taken outside Strand tube station on the Strand, this shows a mid-range 1965 Buick LeSabre hardtop sedan. The 'Q' plate denotes a car here on a temporary import licence. The tube station is still there, but renamed Charing Cross. In the background, the J Lyons tea room is a blast from the past. The esteemed chain had maintained a shop at the corner of the Strand and Duncannon Street at least since the 1920s, but it has lately been occupied by a Pizza Express for many years. Sadly, the Victorian building next to the Buick has been demolished and replaced by something altogether inferior.

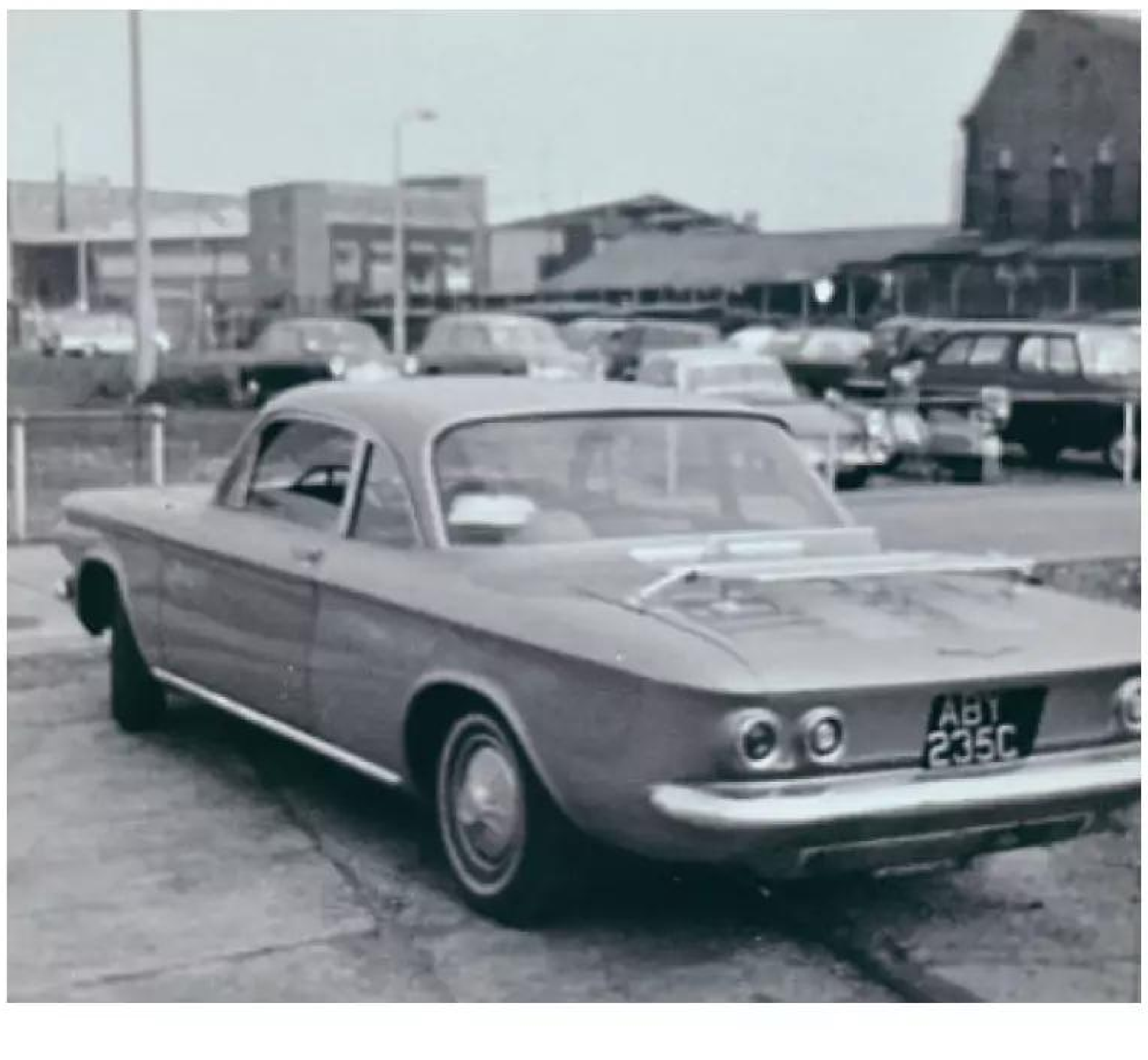




Chevrolet Corvair

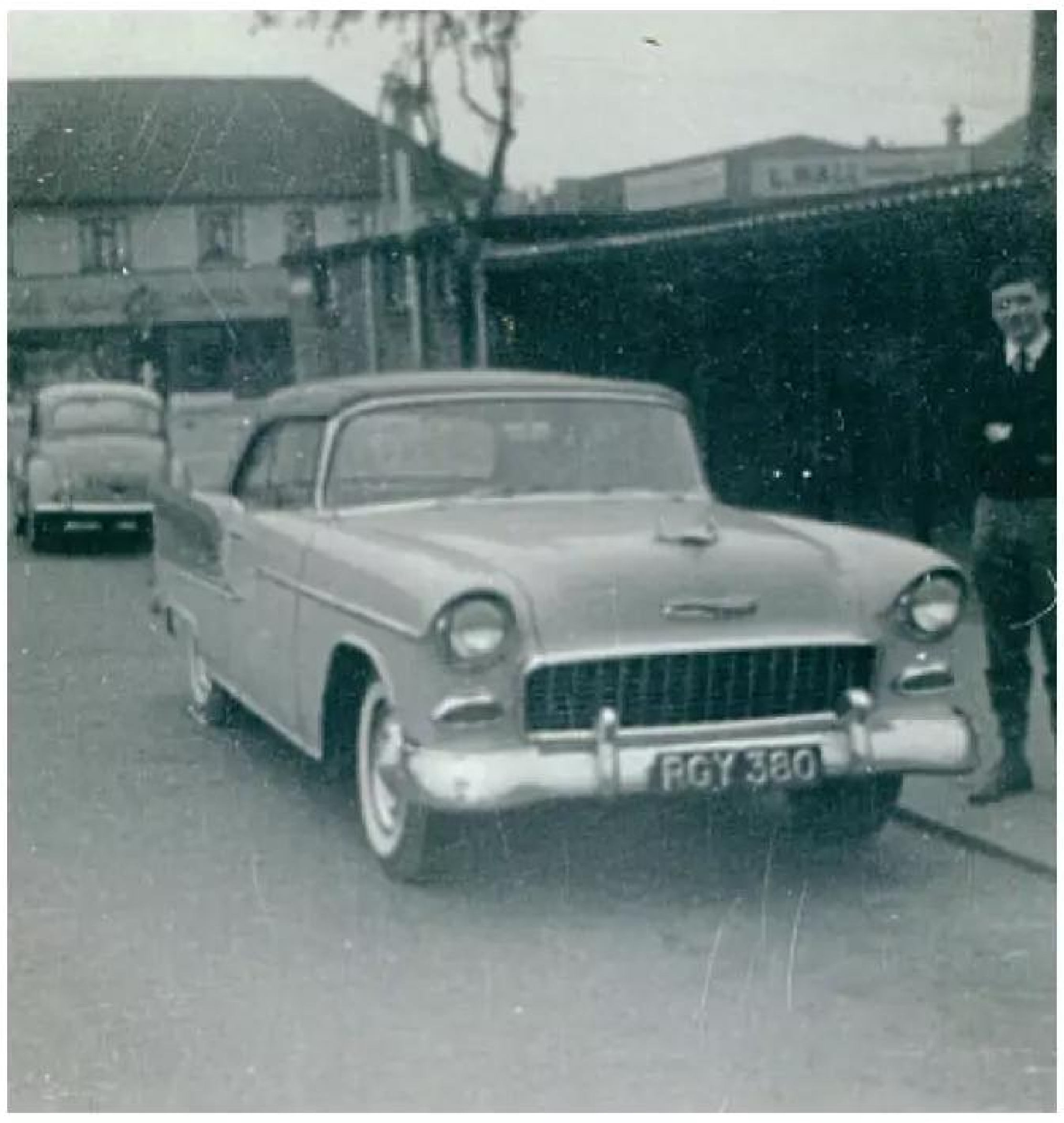
Outside a grim old Nissen hut sits a fairly sporty-looking Chevrolet Corvair coupe. The number plate places it in 1965, but it must be a 1961-64 as the Corvair was restyled for '65. ***Back then cars were often assigned reg plates according to when they were imported into the UK, rather than when they were built or first registered – Ed.***





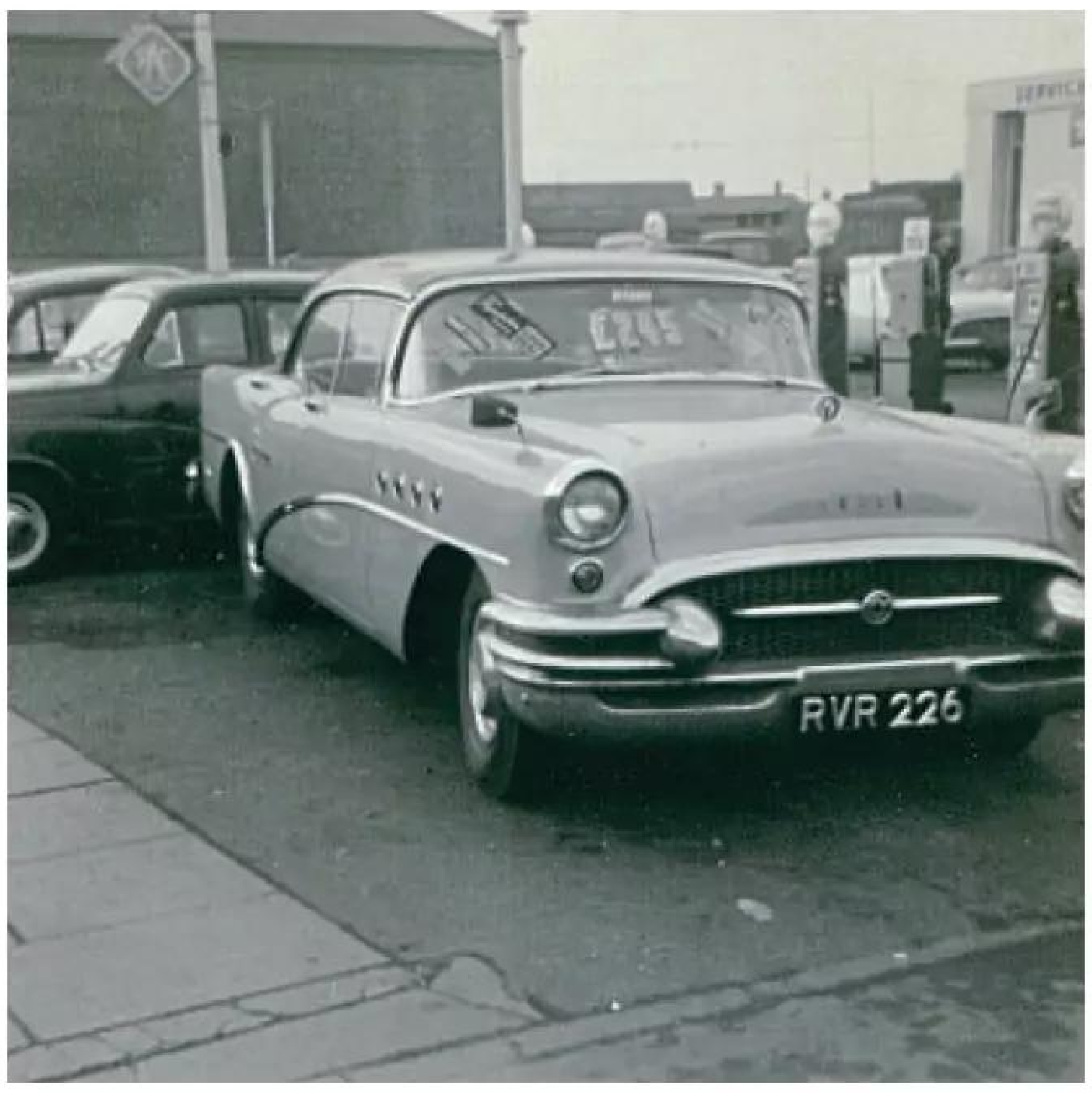
1955 Chevrolet

Looking very pleased with his discovery, Allan, complete with cycle clips, poses by a smart 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air convertible. Apart from wagons, this was the most expensive Chevy for '55 at $2206.



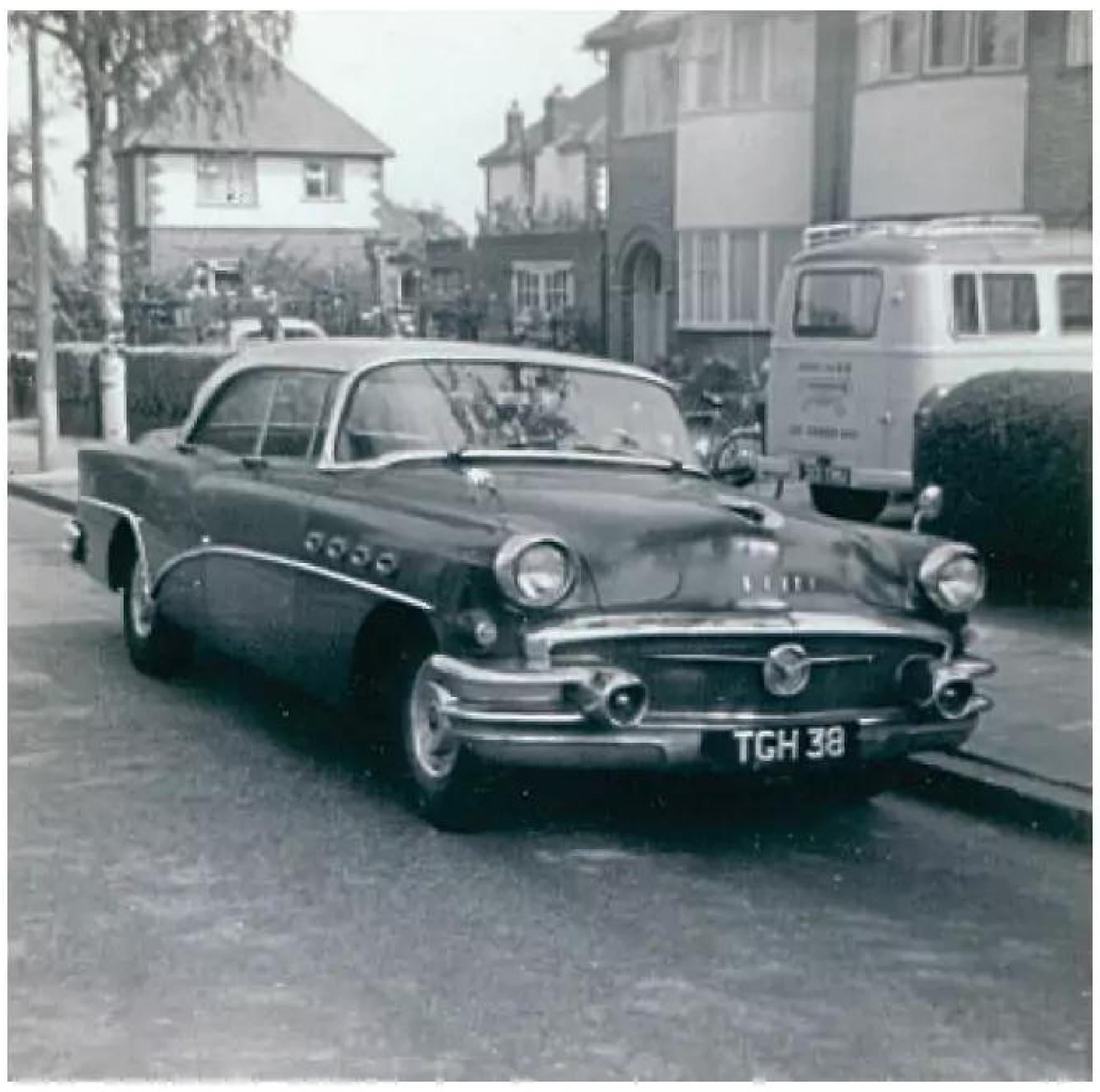
1955 Buick

It gets better. Here's a 1955 Buick (with radio and 'many extras') for just £245, and it looks in better condition, too. This is a Century, with a Riviera hardtop sedan body, and we can't help noticing what must be a personalised plate – it is surely no coincidence that 'RVR' ended up on a Riviera.



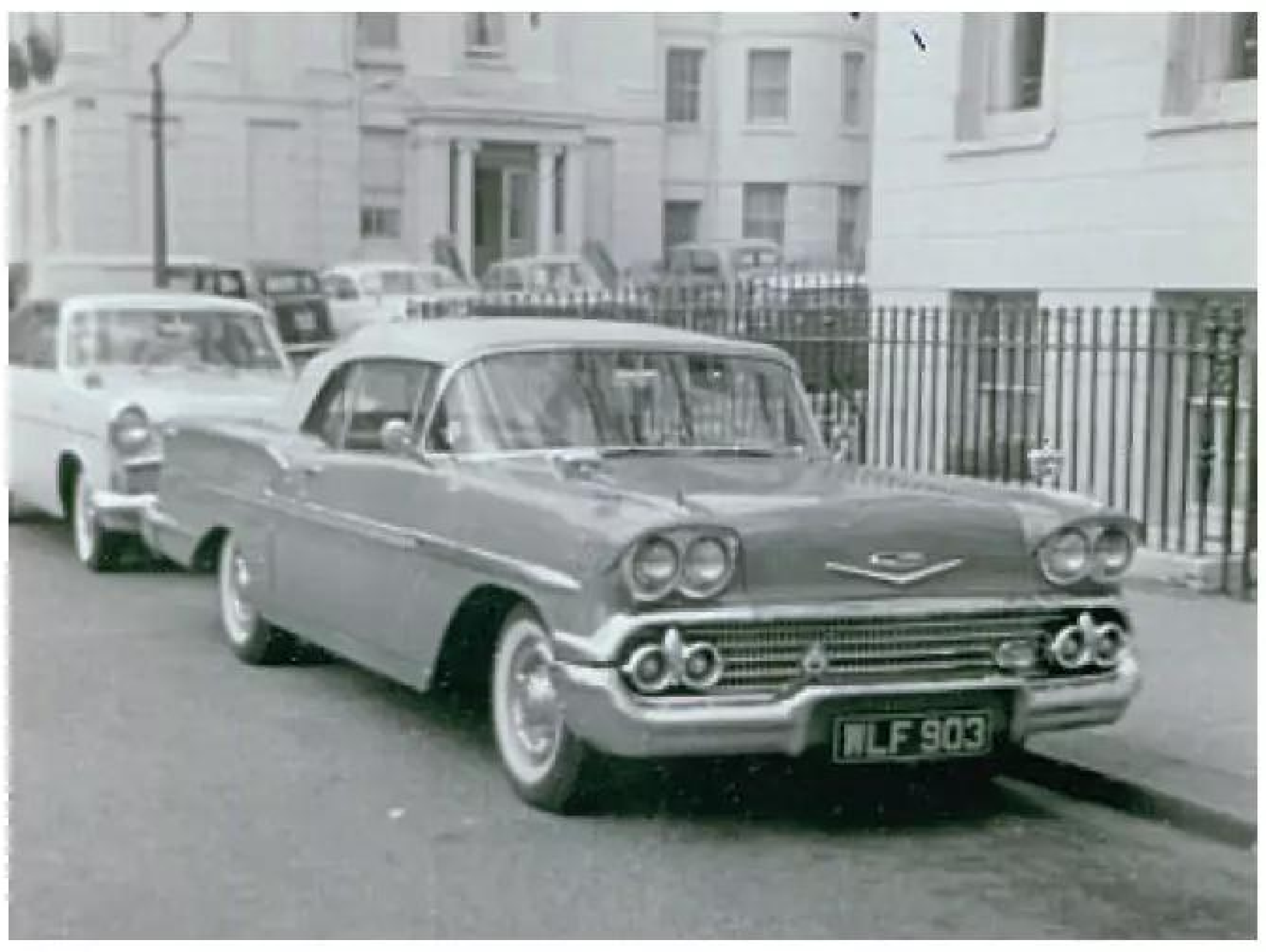
1956 Buick

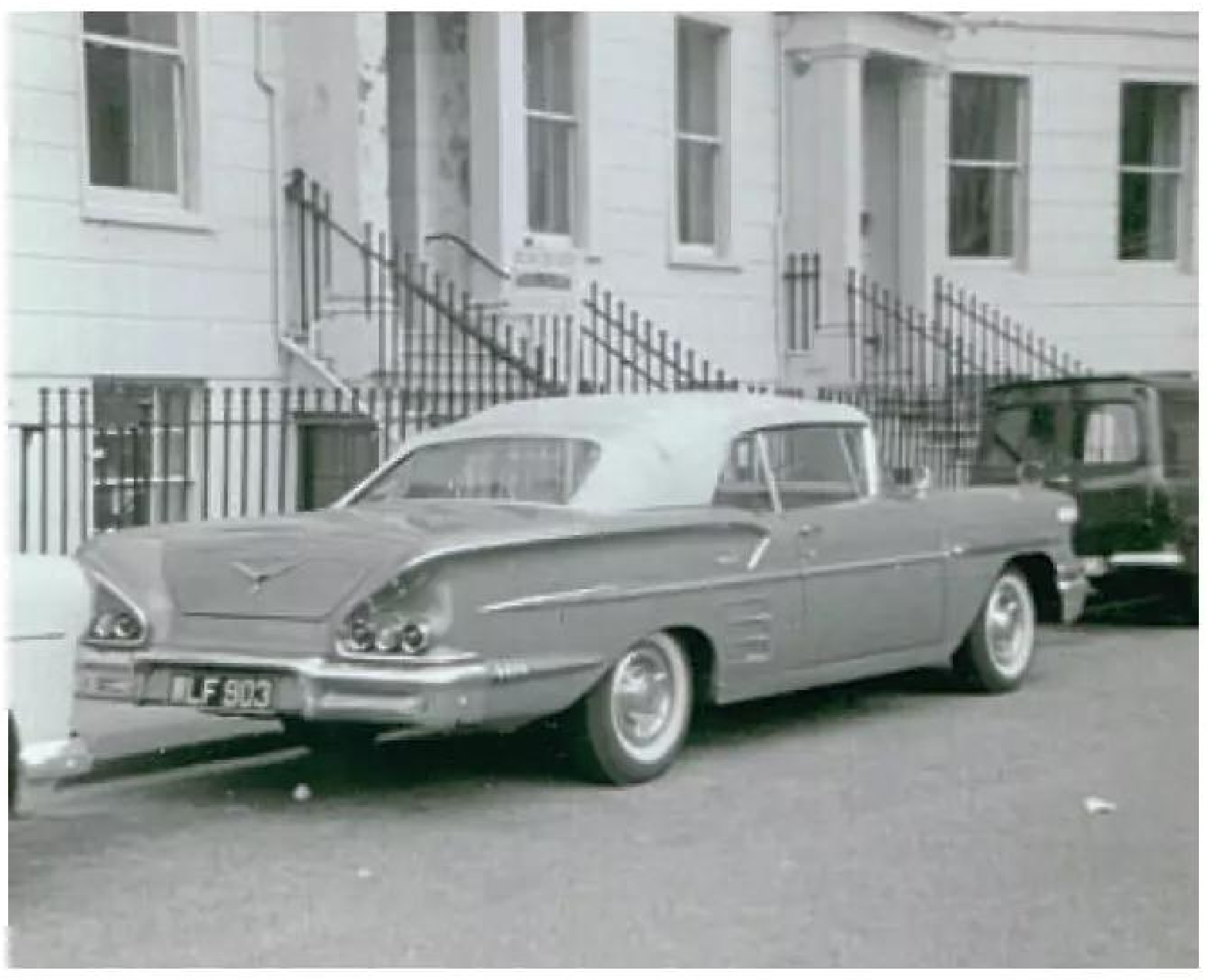
Again, we are looking at a Buick Century Riviera sedan, this time from 1956. The signwriting on the van in the background gives us some clue as to the location – it is for a business in Lee Green, near Lewisham.



1958 Chevrolet

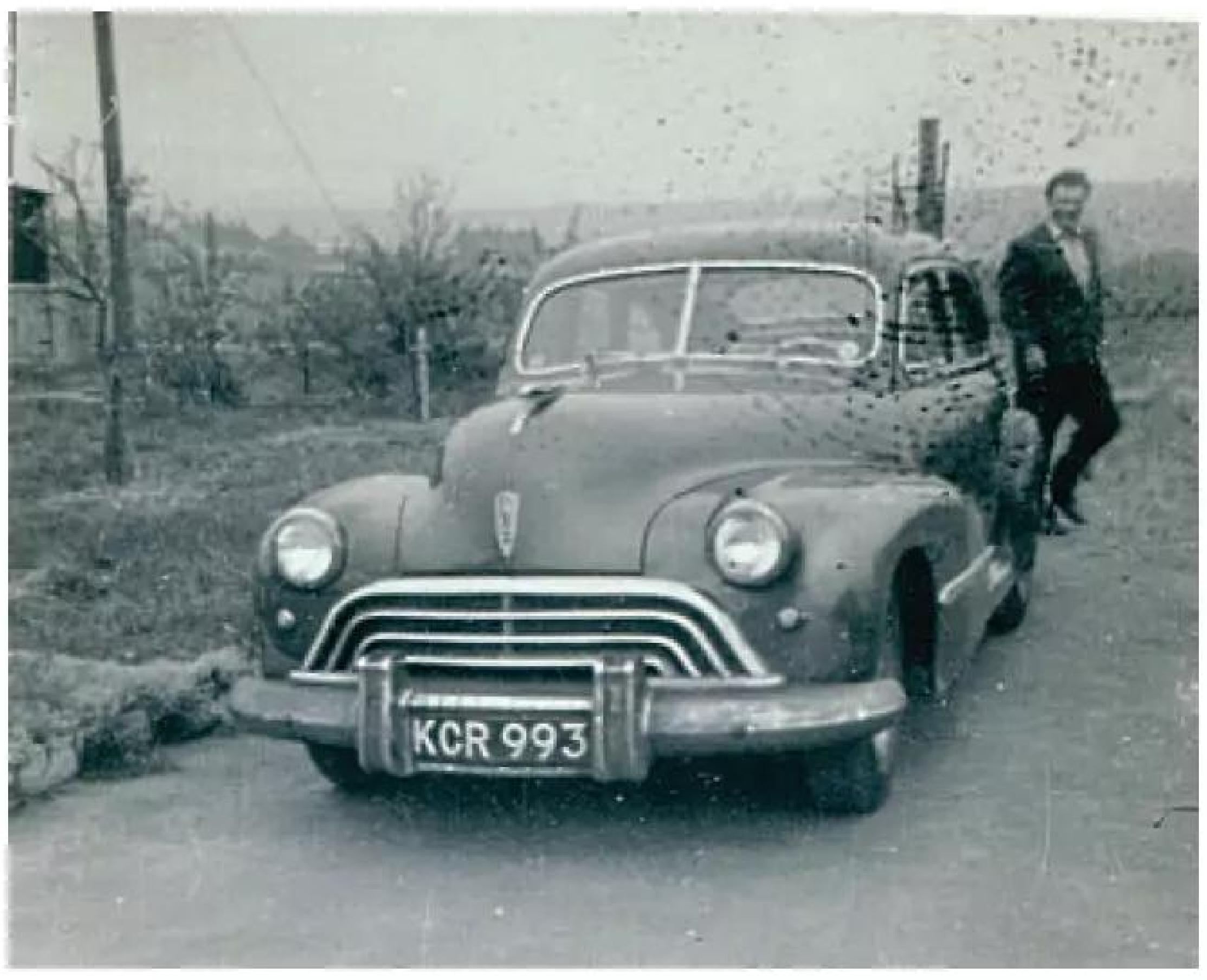
As if a '55 Bel Air ragtop wasn't treasure enough in Sixties Britain, Allan only went and unearthed a 1958 Bel Air Impala convertible, in beautiful bright red. Again, these represented Chevy's most expensive models at $2734 for a six or $2841 for a V8. The splendid backdrop gives us the impression that the location might have been somewhere near Regent's Park.

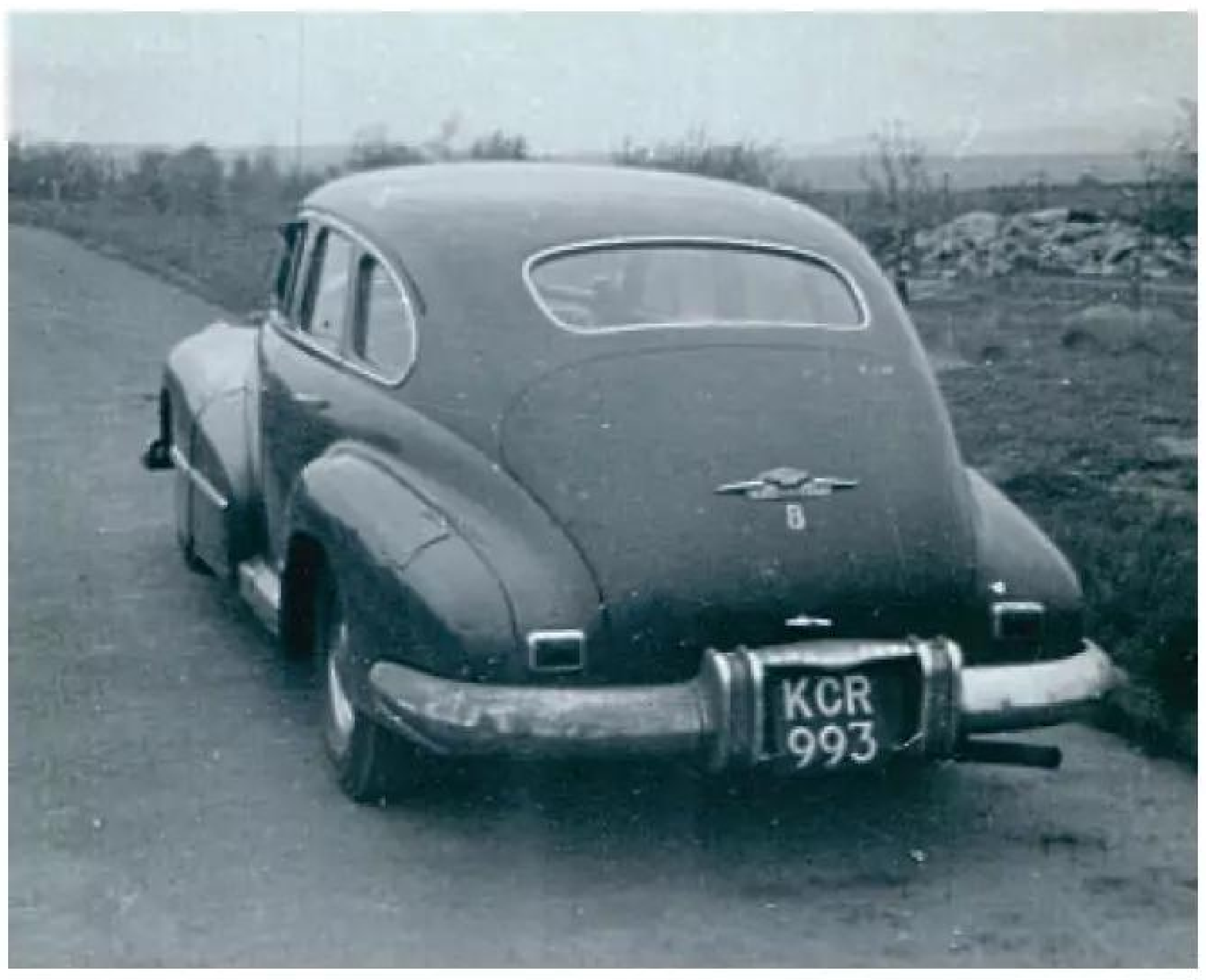




1947 Oldsmobile

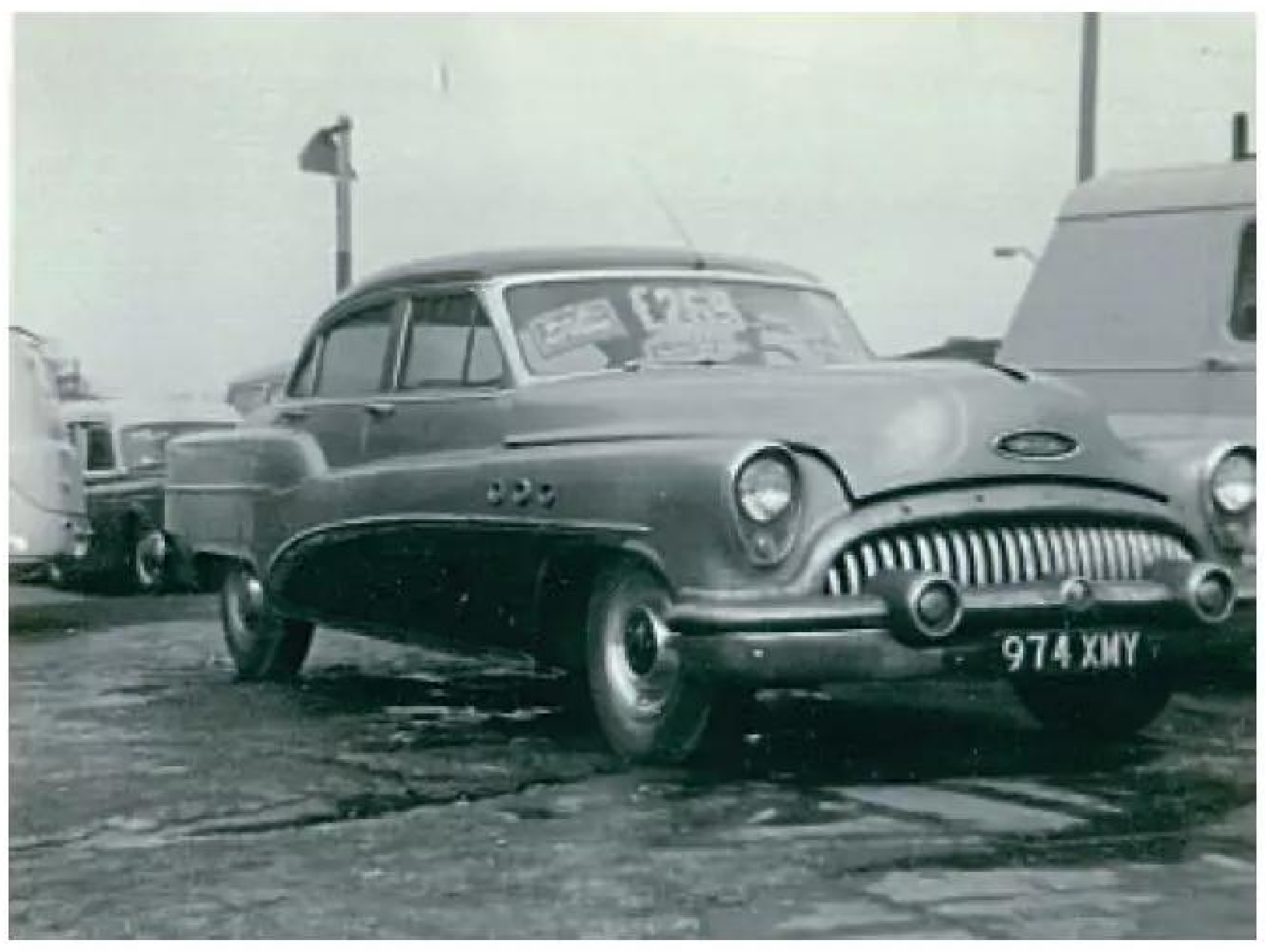
A droopy grille and a bumper that looks like it could batter its way into Fort Knox are hallmarks of a 1946-47 Oldsmobile. This Southampton-registered example carries a badge which lets us know that it's a straight-eight model – either a Special 68, Dynamic Cruiser 78 or Custom Cruiser 98.

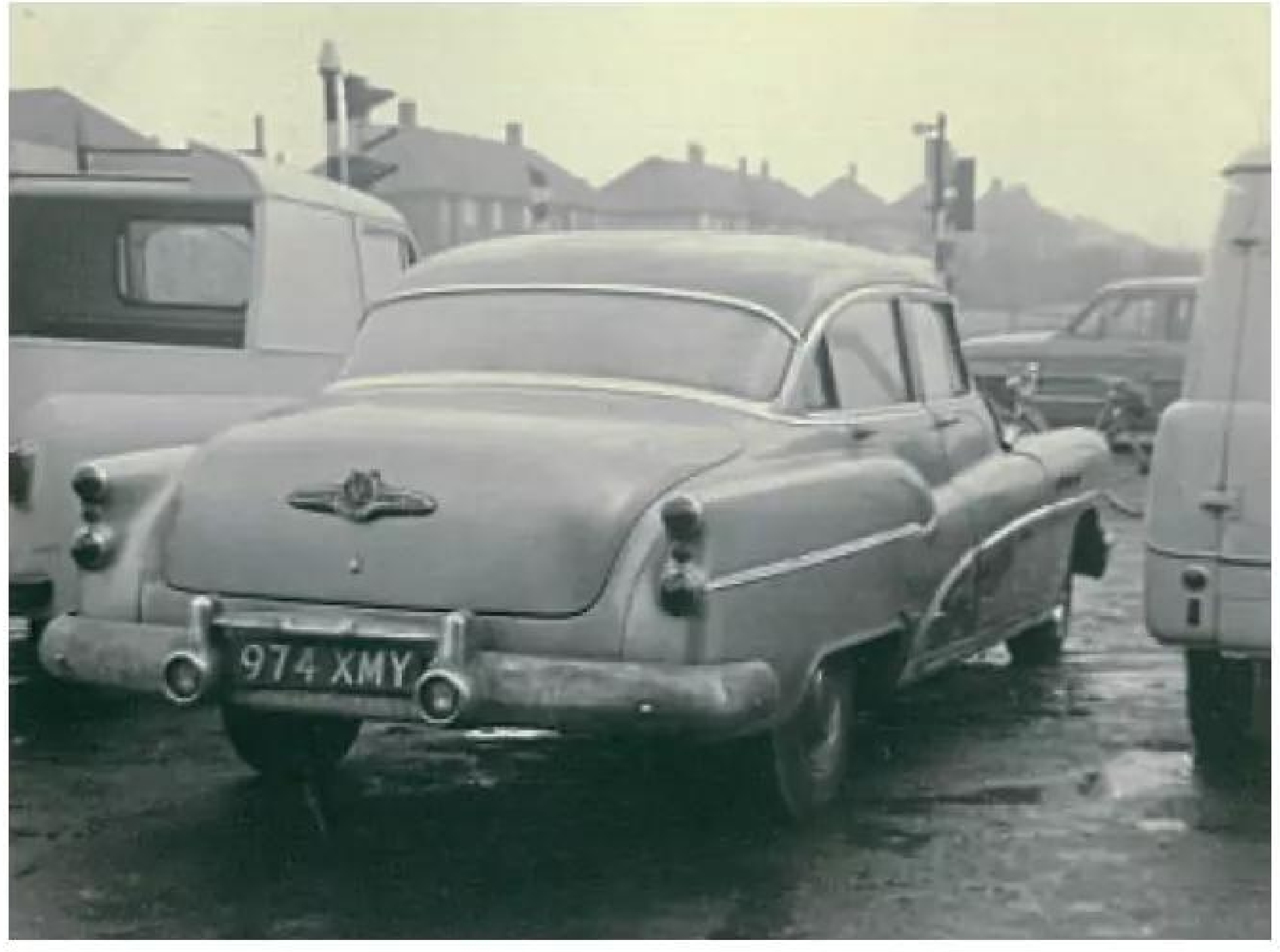




1953 Buick

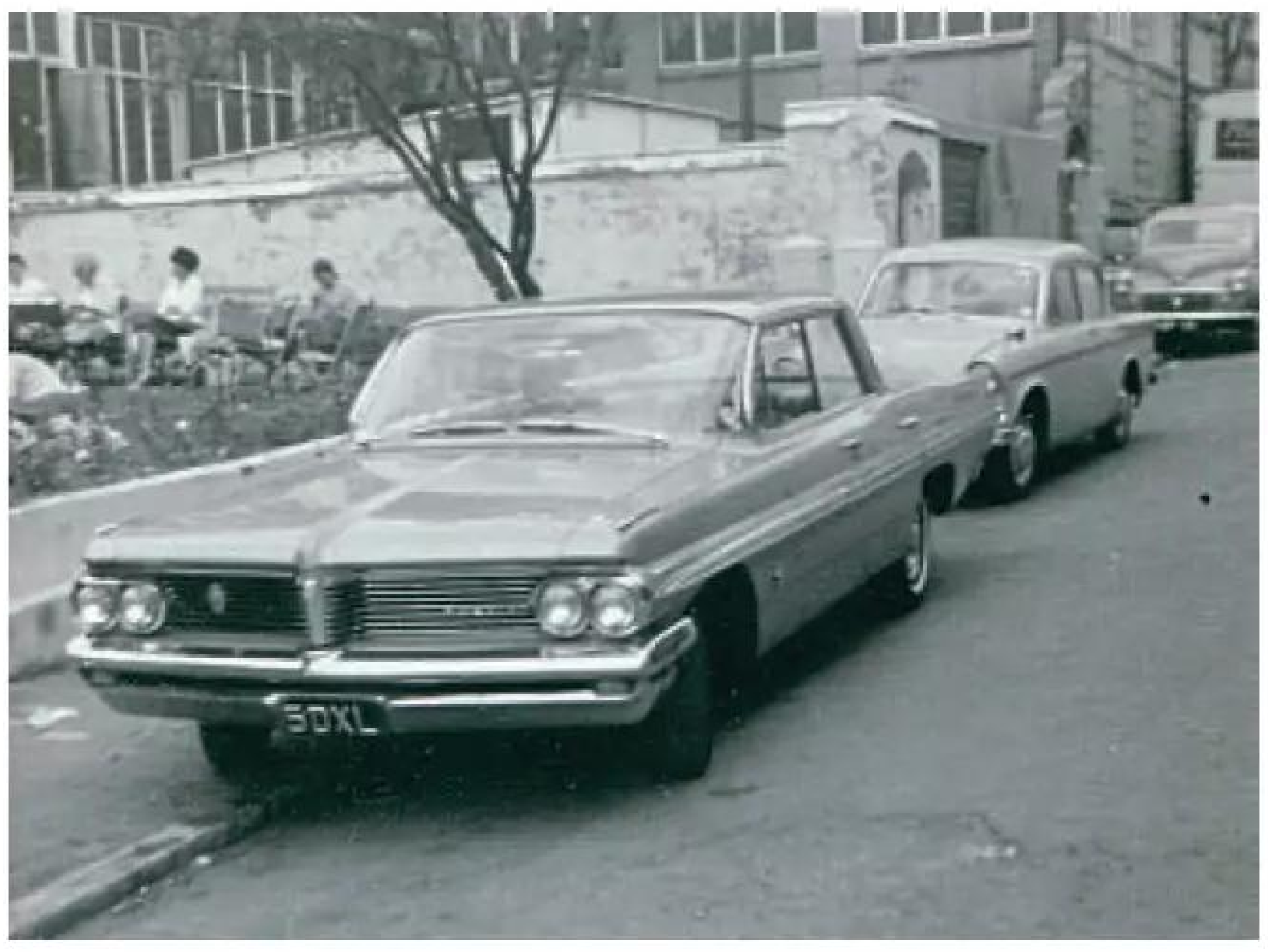
If you saw anyone advertising a 1953 Buick Super sedan today for £265, you'd bite their arm off. The scene was Kay Kar Sales in the Woodman Parade, Westwood Lane, Blackfen. The building is now occupied by Enterprise Rent-a-Car. Allan remembers a major accident occurring outside in 1960 when an AEC Mammoth Major, one of the famous Bowaters newsprint lorries, overturned.

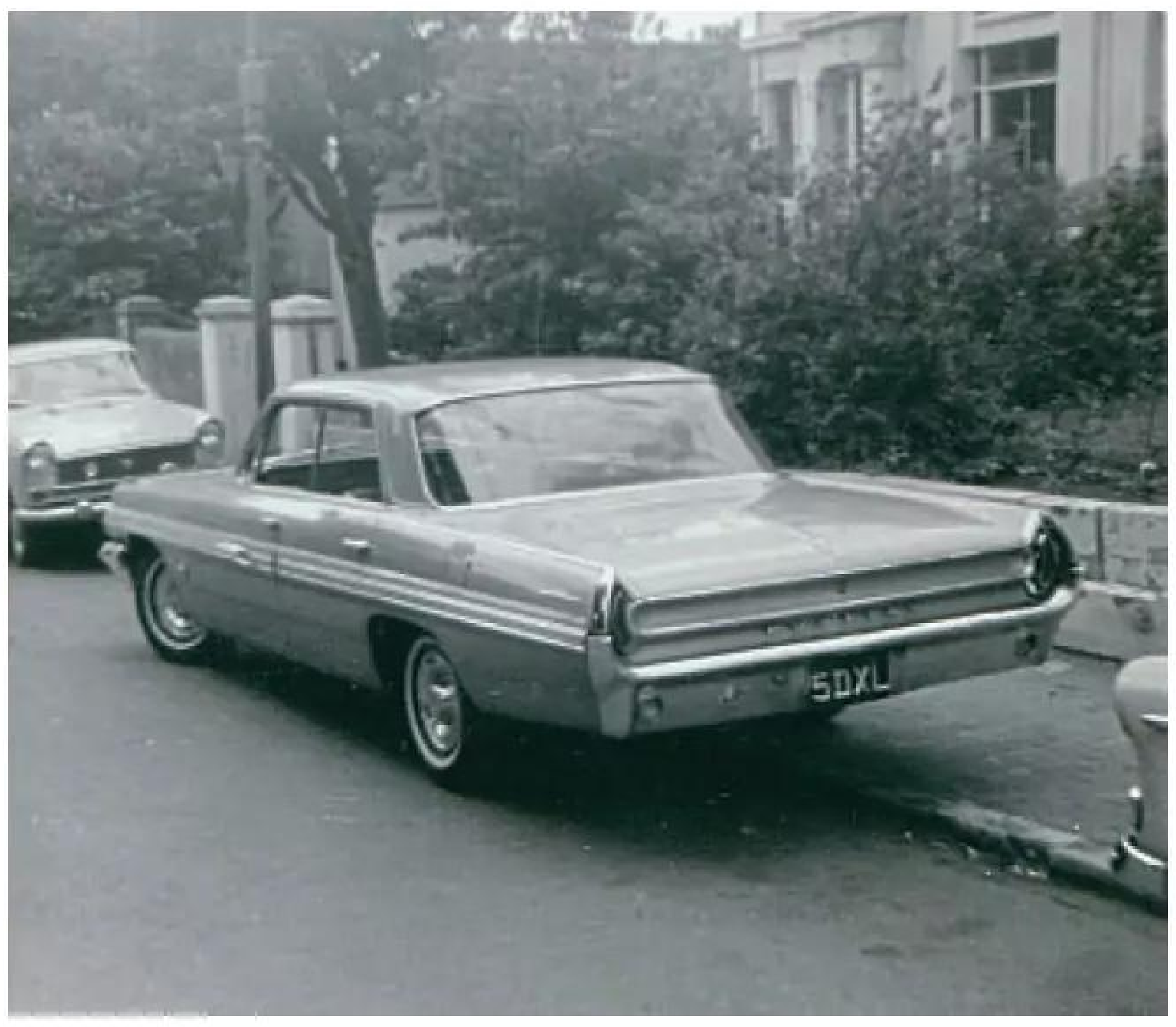


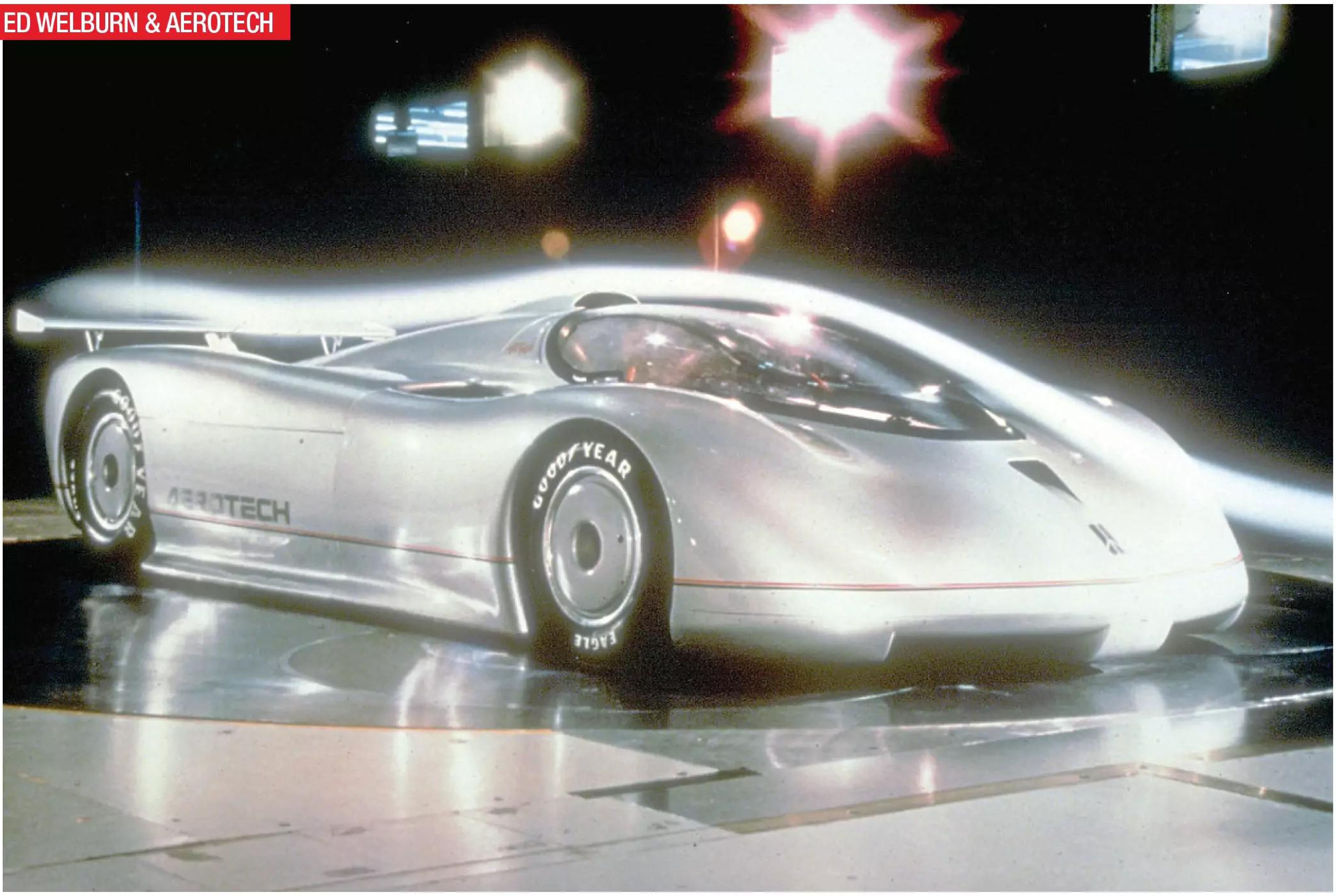


1962 Pontiac

A droopy grille and a bumper that looks like it could batter its way into Fort Knox are hallmarks of a 1946-47 Oldsmobile. This Southampton-registered example carries a badge which lets us know that it's a straight-eight model – either a Special 68, Dynamic Cruiser 78 or Custom Cruiser 98.







A DESIGNER'S *fairytale*

Words: David Rodríguez Sánchez **Photography:** General Motors, David Reeves, Ed Welburn

Taking a concept and turning it into a car capable of mind-boggling speed sounds like a dream job. Ed Welburn turned his dream into reality…

When he was just eight years old Ed Welburn was taken to a motor show in his home city of Philadelphia. It was an event that was to shape the course of his life.

Within three years he had sent his first letter to General Motors; they replied and told him which steps to take to follow his dream.

"I first got my foot in the door at GM Design in 1971. I was fortunate to be a part of a 10-week-long summer internship programme. I had studied product design, sculpture and painting at Howard University's School in Washington DC," said Ed.

"They liked my work so much as an intern that they wanted me to complete my senior year at Howard University and then they would hire me. This happened on September 2, 1972.

"At the time, my student portfolio was very much inspired by the Chaparral 2H, with its sleek profile and windows on its side. I created a series of sketches of production sports cars based on that theme. I was assigned to design development, the studio for new hires, and I may have been the last GM designer to have gone through the old 'school'."

After a month there, Ed began a year's rotation through three different studios to see where he would be best placed.

"At the end of that first year I was assigned to the Buick studio because they thought I was a great fit with designing advanced Riviera concepts. I spent two years in the Buick studio, contributing to the design of the 1977 Buick Electra, '77 Riviera and 1979 Riviera. Then I was assigned to the Oldsmobile Studio where I worked for 20 years. I worked my way up from entry level designer to studio chief designer in Oldsmobile.

"I loved what I was doing but, as said, I also had a passion for race cars, in particular cars which raced at Le Mans. The Porsche 917 long tail was a favourite and in my spare time I would sketch that type of thing, leaving a nice stack of those sketches on the corner of my drawing table."

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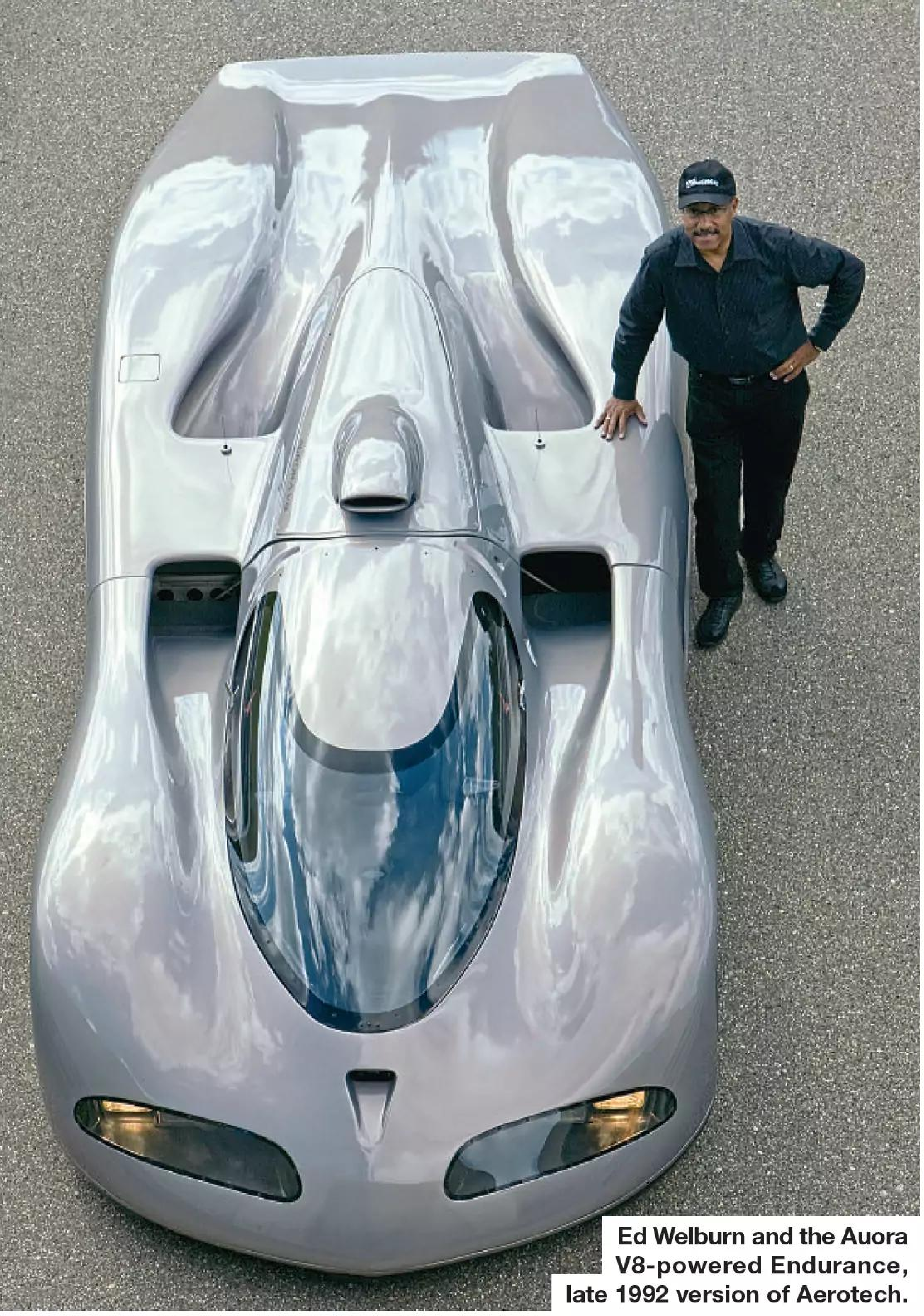
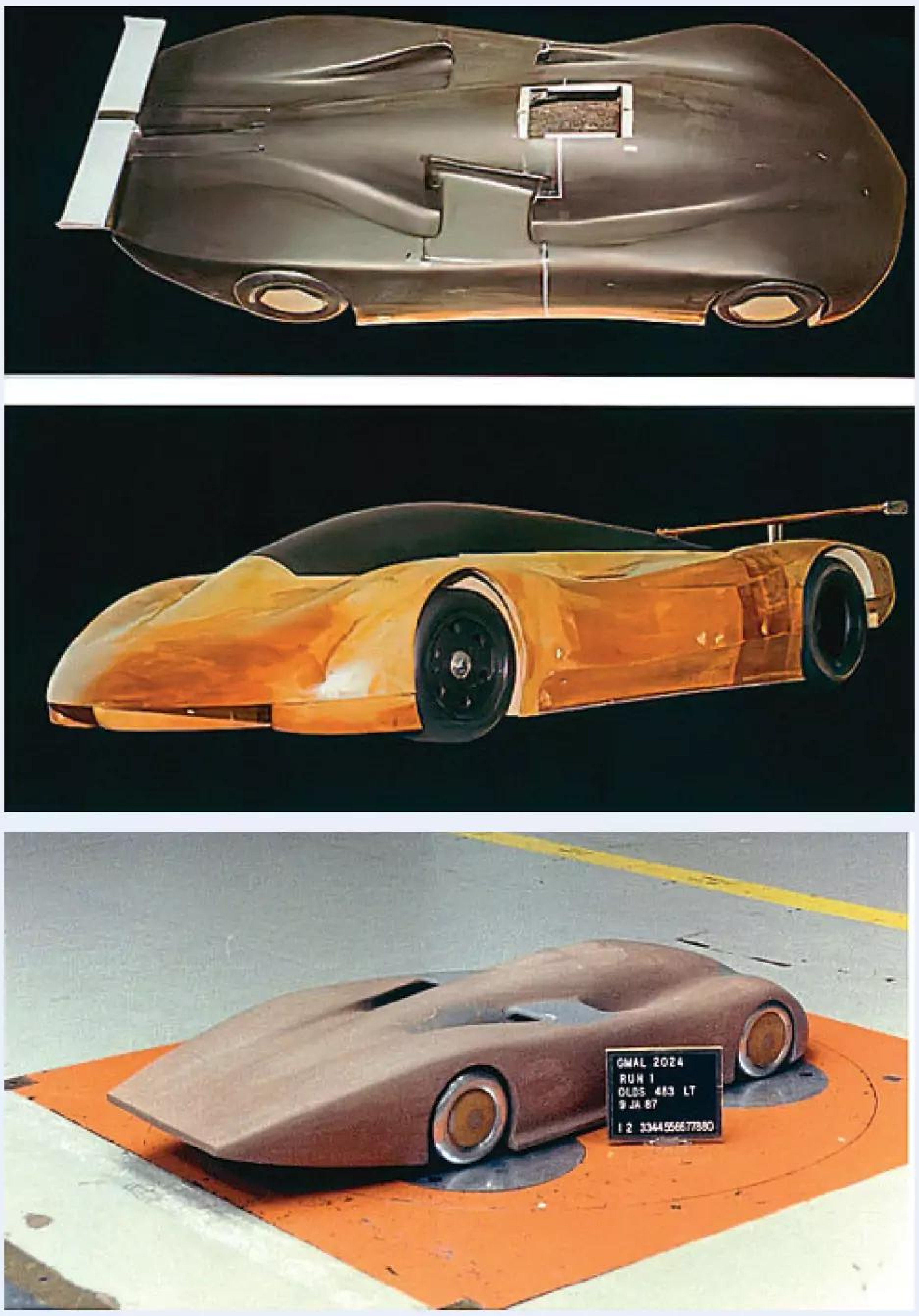


Ed Welburn and the Auora V8-powered Endurance, late 1992 version of Aerotech.



March's and GM wind tunnel scale models validated all aero aspects of Aerotech project.

One summer's day, Len Casillo, executive design director in charge of Oldsmobile and Buick studios, stopped by Ed's desk. He had remembered seeing his Le Mans-inspired sketches and asked him to create some sketches for a secret Oldsmobile research vehicle.

Despite being busy working on the programme to create a new 1988 Cutlass Supreme, he jumped at the chance to sketch on this research vehicle.

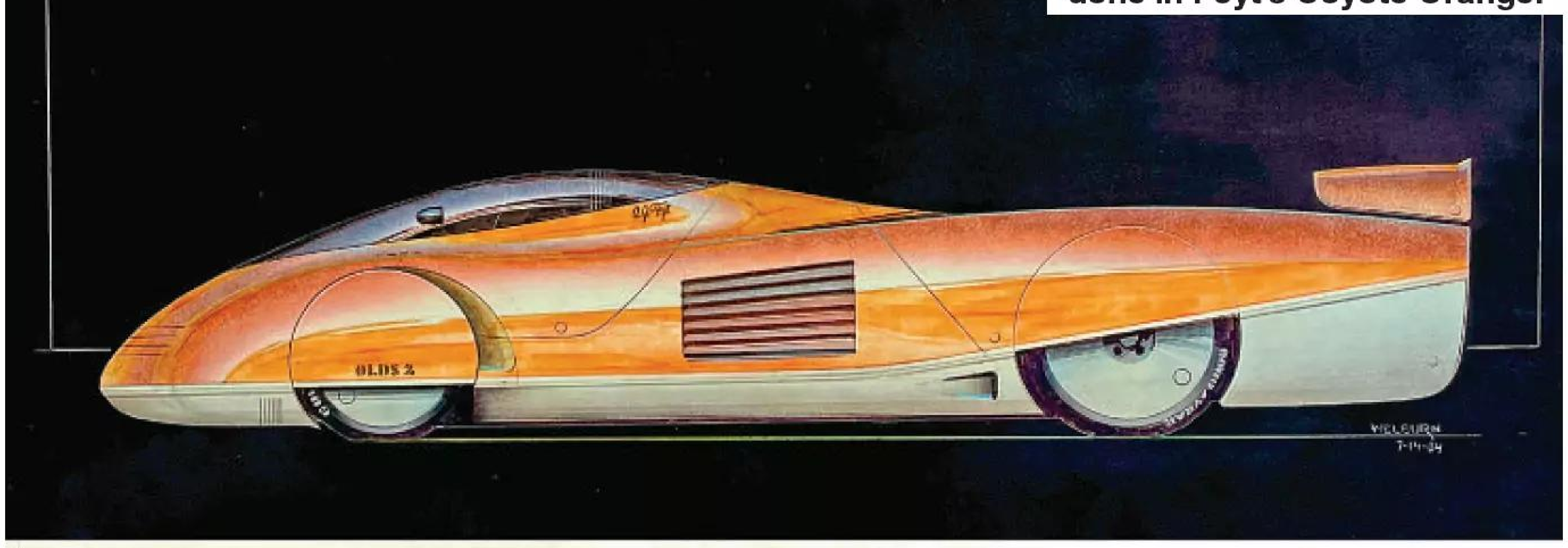
"I had a plan to create a series of drawings, but Casillo returned to my desk just as I completed my very first one. The sketch – dated July 14, 1984 – was done in Foyt's Coyote Orange and its wheels were skirted to reduce drag. I cautioned Casillo that I had many other ideas yet to be drawn, but he raced off with sketch number one," recalls Ed.

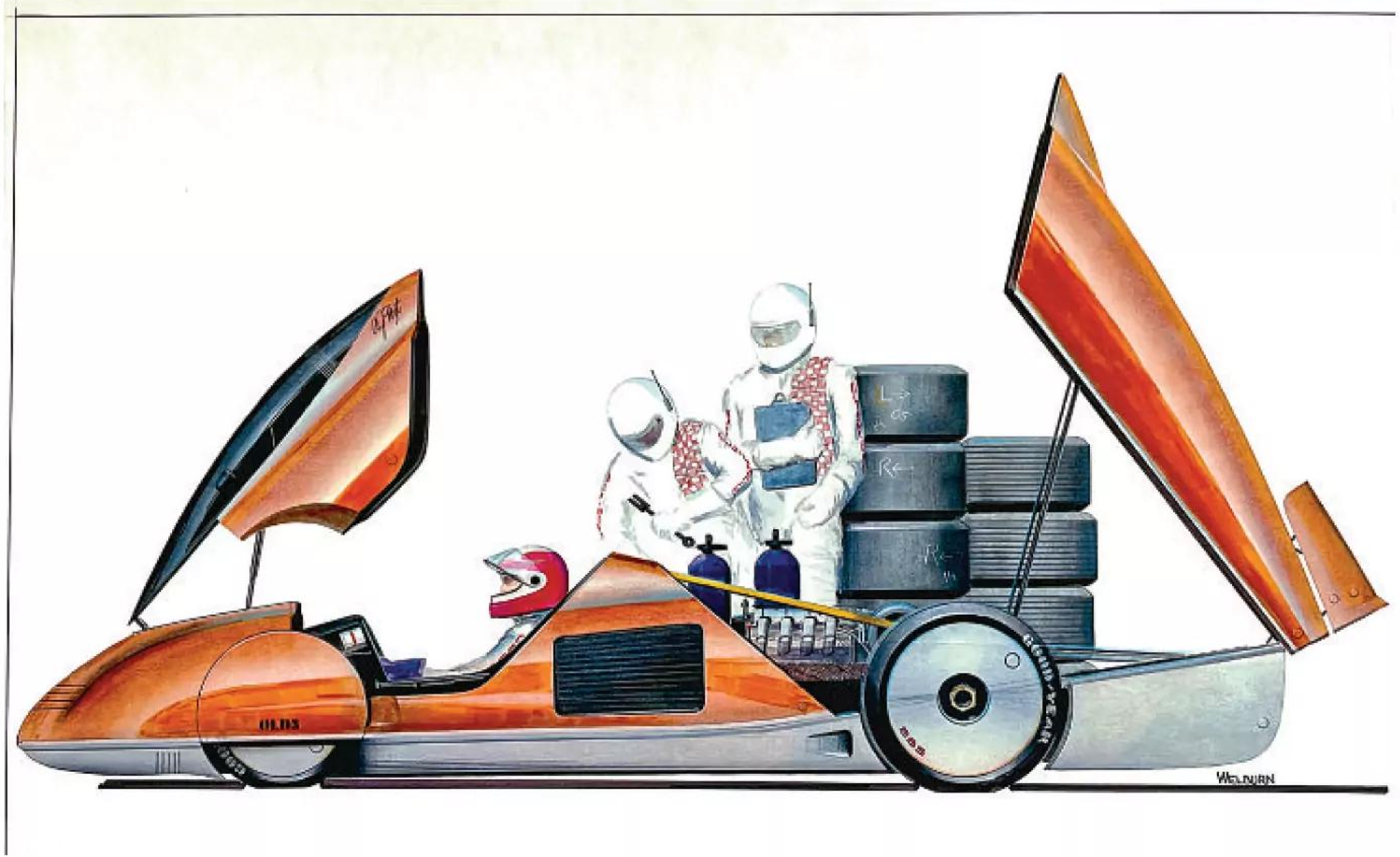
Design leadership loved the drawing and wanted him to develop a scale model before the Oldsmobile leadership team and A J Foyt came to GM Design for their meeting on the project.

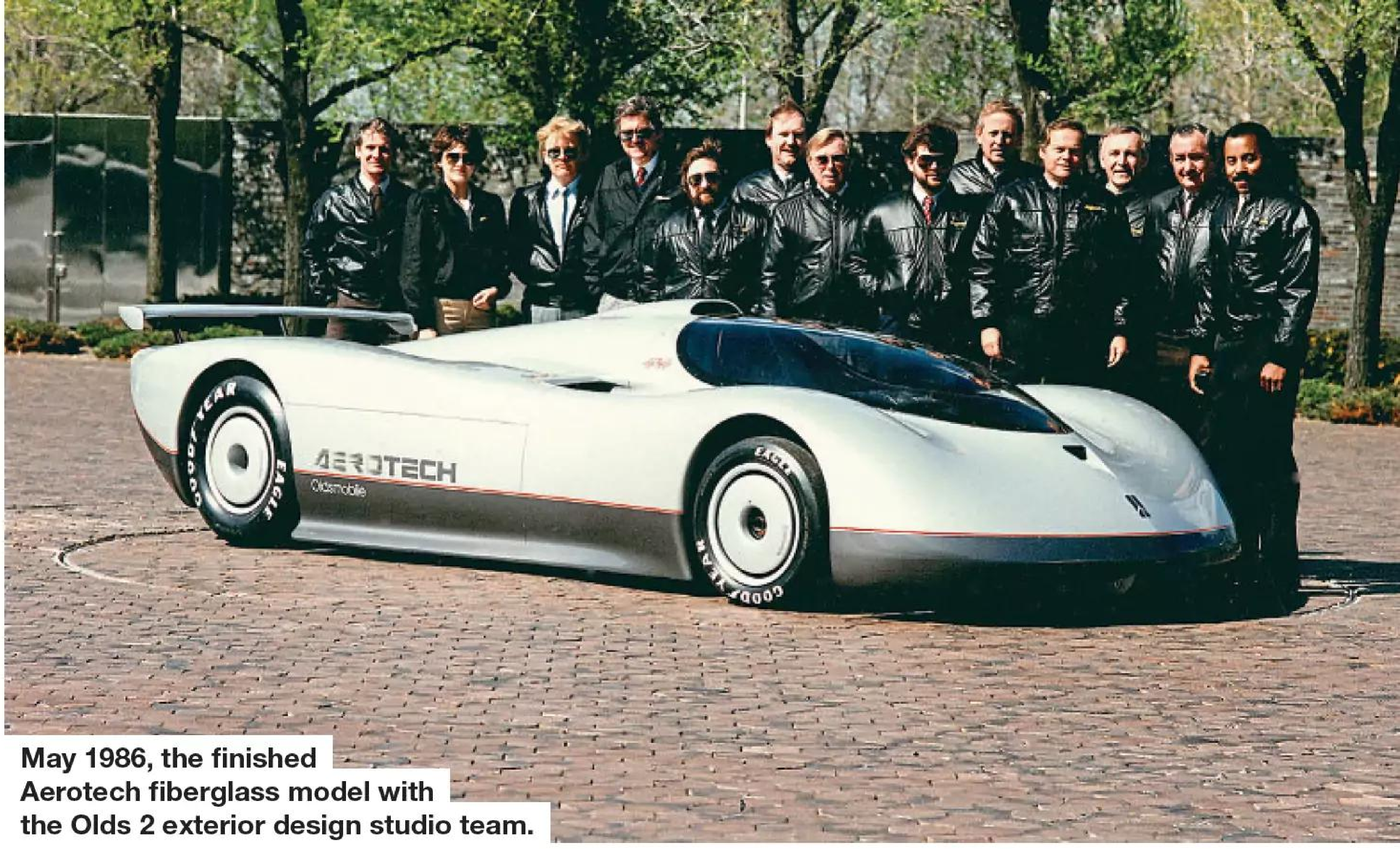
"When they came, Olds' Advanced Studios original streamliner research model was displayed in the conference room for their meeting. My completed scale model was not. When Foyt saw the streamliner he was concerned or, okay, angry, and so were the Olds leaders. They were then shown my scale model and the reaction was over the moon."

At that point he was still not assigned to the project, but the following day Len Casillo came to his desk in the Oldsmobile studio. "How would you like to work on a high-speed research vehicle with 1000hp, a March Indy car chassis,

Welburn's very first Aerotech sketch was done in Foyt's Coyote Orange.






May 1986, the finished Aerotech fiberglass model with the Olds 2 exterior design studio team.

and A J Foyt as its driver?" he asked.

Ed was 'just' a mid-level designer at that time. There were three levels of executive designers above him and it was very unusual, even unique, that he was given so much authority to lead Aerotech from a design perspective.

At the time, the world closed course record had changed hands many times. In 1970 Buddy Baker's Dodge Daytona held it, hitting the 200mph barrier around Talladega's Superspeedway in Alabama. Foyt's Coyote took it in 1974 doing 218mph, with Mark Donohue averaging 221mph in 1975 with his Porsche 917/30, 1230hp Can Am monster; both of them, again, at Talladega. Foyt promised then to take it back someday.

Mercedes' C111 IV was the immediate predecessor to Aerotech's, with test engineer Hans Liebold driving to a new speed record of 251mph on the Nardò, Lecce circuit in Italy in 1979.

"Olds thought it would be a great way of promoting its new four-cylinder engine names the Quad 4. Ted Louckes, the powerful chief engineer for Oldsmobile, had gotten that position only a little time before. It was his vision to create a vehicle that would exploit the capability of the new four-cylinder engine and I consider Ted to be the godfather of the project," says Ed.

"Along with the car itself, I designed the crew uniforms, Foyt's driving suit, the transporter for Aerotech, graphics, etc. My day job was designing the Cutlass Supreme, Ceira and Calais though. As well as the Pace Cars for the Indy 500 in 1985 and, later on, 1988. My automobile artwork always began with very rough sketches and then the final rendering was created. The entire process took about eight hours."

The working relationship between the design studio and engineering was quite formal. Bill Porterfield was the Oldsmobile engineer who managed the Aerotech project.

There were two Oldsmobile exterior design studios at the time: Olds 1 did the Olds 98, 88, and Toronado, while Olds 2, where Ed worked, did all things Cutlass as well as the Aerotech record cars.

"Olds 1 did the subsequent Aerotech ll and lll mere show cars, which had nothing to do with the goals of the original Aerotech," says Ed. "This constituted a desperate move from Oldsmobile to capitalise on our Aerotech name and achievements. There was an unpleasant rivalry between the two Olds studios.

"Bill Porterfield had to communicate with multiple suppliers for the Aerotech project: Olds 2 at GM Design, March Engineering, the two engine suppliers and their special advisors, Goodyear, GM Aero Lab, GM Proving Grounds, Ft Stockton track facilities, A J Foyt Jr, A J Foyt Enterprises and countless others."

The body and chassis were engineered at March Engineering in Bicester, here in the UK, while Ed's studio worked very closely with GM Aero Labs so they could get the most slippery shape possible.

Max Schenkel was the aerodynamicist and ran GM's wind-tunnel at its tech centre and had been a consultant for numerous race cars too. According to Tino Belli, as much as for Aerotech itself, Schenkel was interested in the pros and cons of the different wind-tunnel testing methods, mainly to try and prove that the GM Aero Lab was better than any other facility.

"He also was the person who insisted on having the super-low drag long tail version," says Ed. "Most aerodynamicists are very difficult to work with, but Max was a dream. He was very knowledgeable about aero and understood the needs of design. The process in the studio was to quickly move from sketches to a clay scale model and from that move just as quickly to the full-size clay model. Kirk Jones, one of the most talented sculptors I ever worked with, was the lead sculptor."

March received casts taken from GM's clay model to define the Aerotech's top body surfaces, but nothing had been specified for the crucial underside. "Though my first sketches were, as said, done in Coyote Orange, silver was generally used at design to best evaluate the surface development of our clay models. It looked so good in silver that we stayed with it," recalls Ed.

At one point the scale model – while still representing Welburn's very first idea – was painted metallic red and then was later changed to silver. The final design of Aerotech was silver in part to make it clear that Aerotech was a GM concept and not a 'Foyt' concept.

"Aerotech is wider than a conventional car, requiring us to execute the clay model in a location separate from the Oldsmobile studios. Doing it in the basement of the design building also gave us the benefit of added security,

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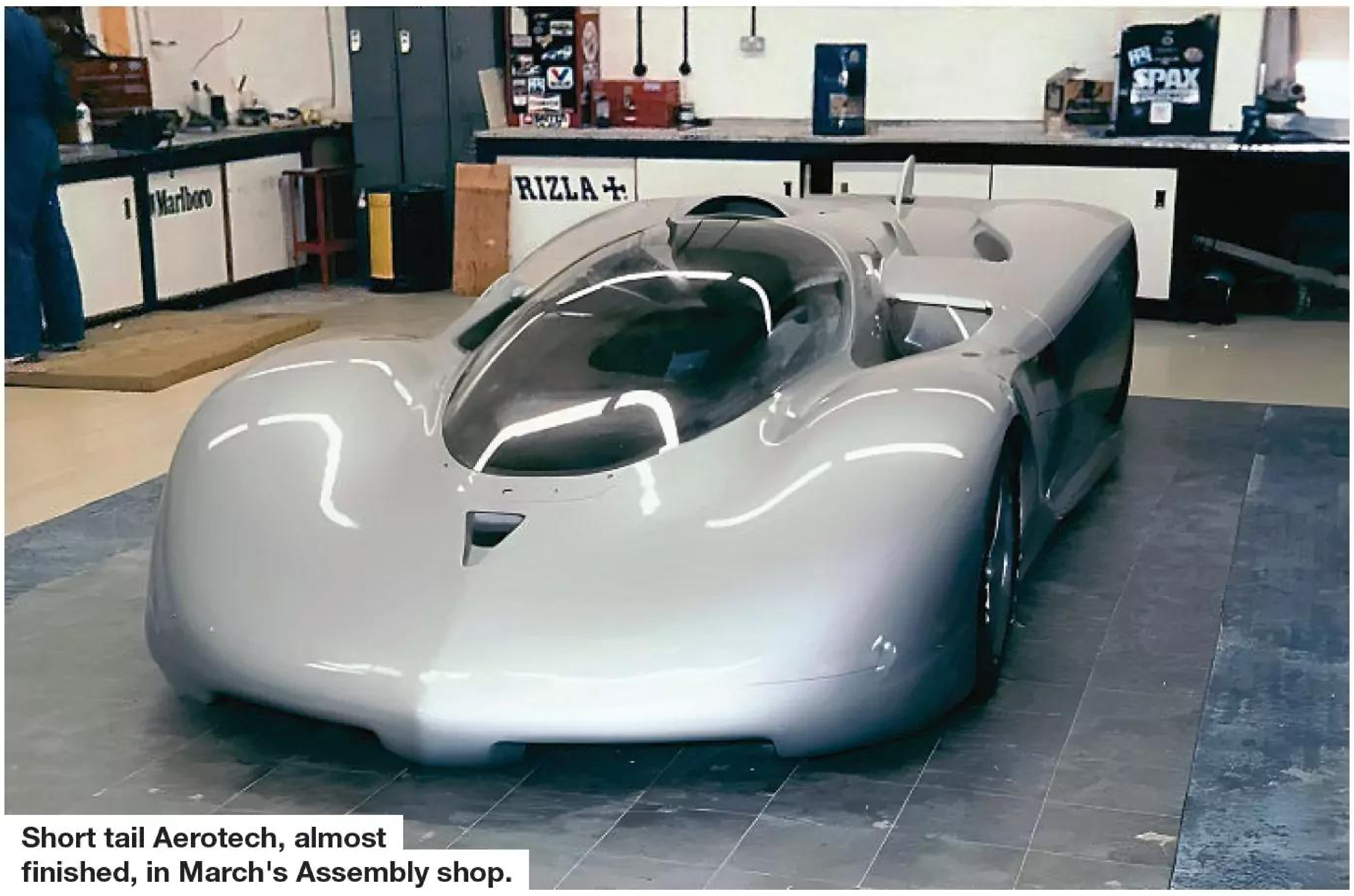
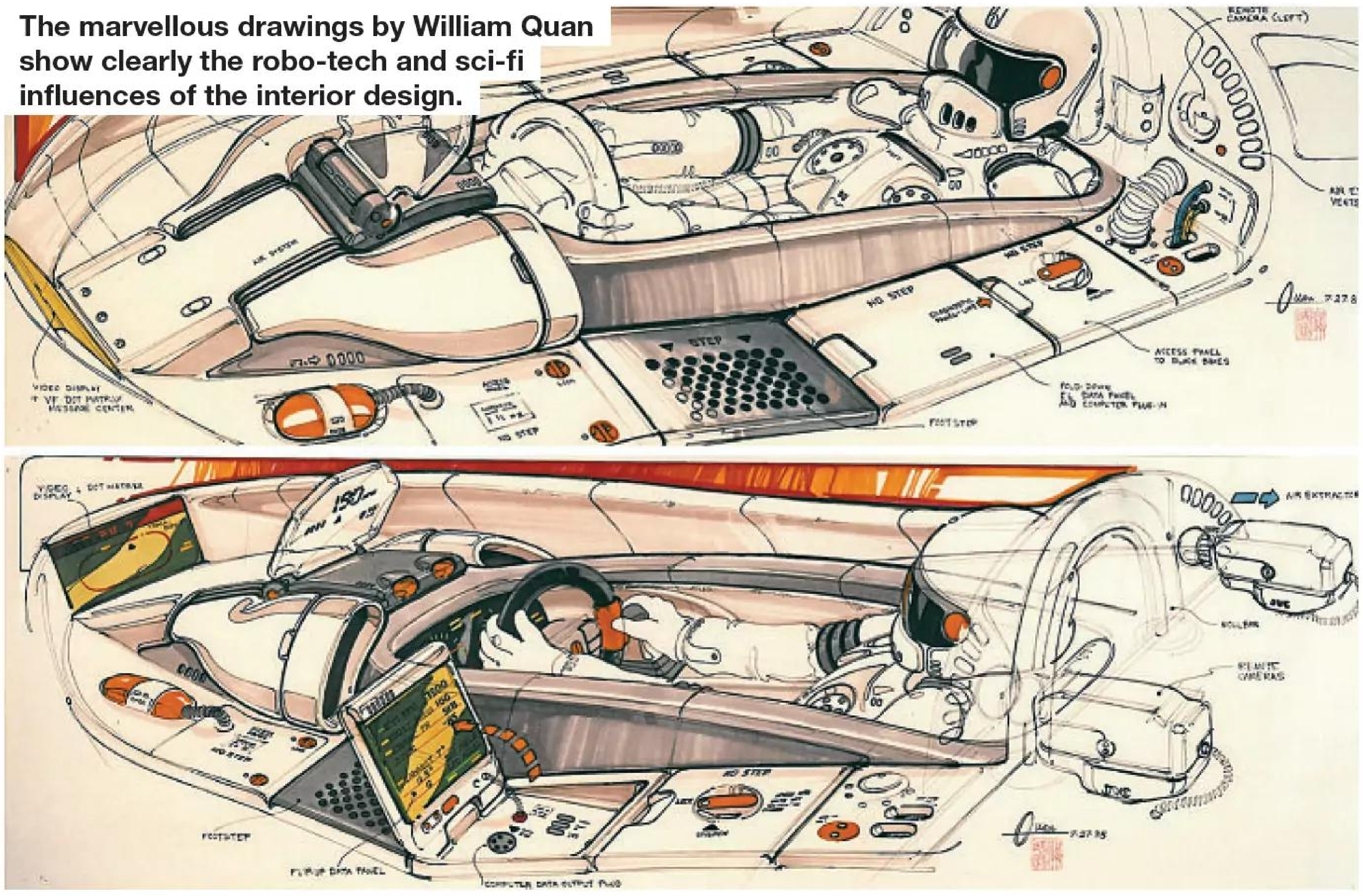
The glass fibre Aerotech showcar served as the model for the official press photos released.

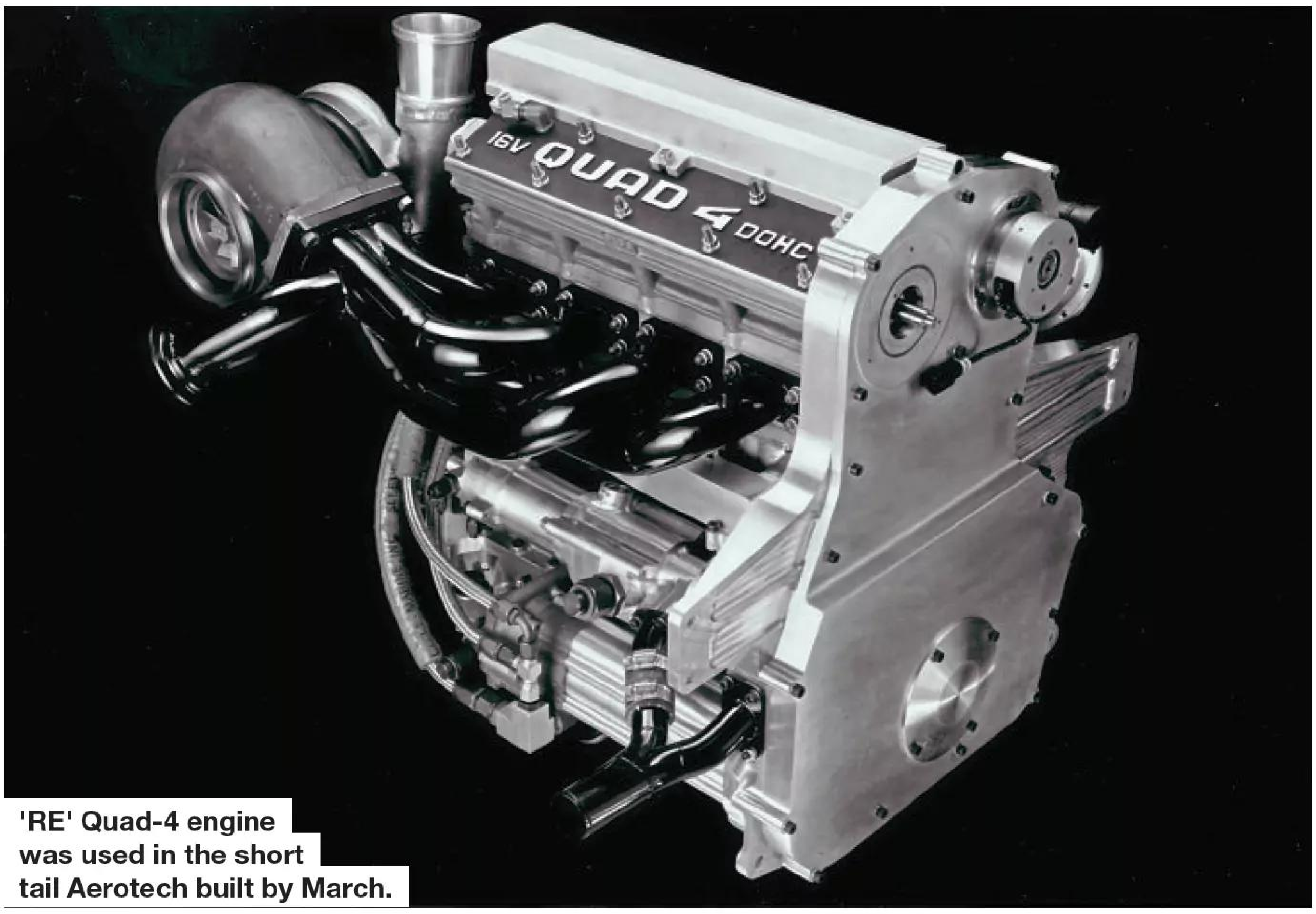

Short tail Aerotech, almost finished, in March's Assembly shop.


REMOTE CAMERA (LEFT)
NO STEP
STEP
ACCESS PANEL TO BLACK BOXES
FOOTSTEP
AIR EXTRACTOR
ROLLBAR
REMOTE CAMERAS
FOOTSTEP

The marvellous drawings by William Quan show clearly the robo-tech and sci-fi influences of the interior design.

Oldsmobile
GOODYEAR

A J Foyt in the purpose-made Oldsmobile livery designed all the same by Ed Welburn.

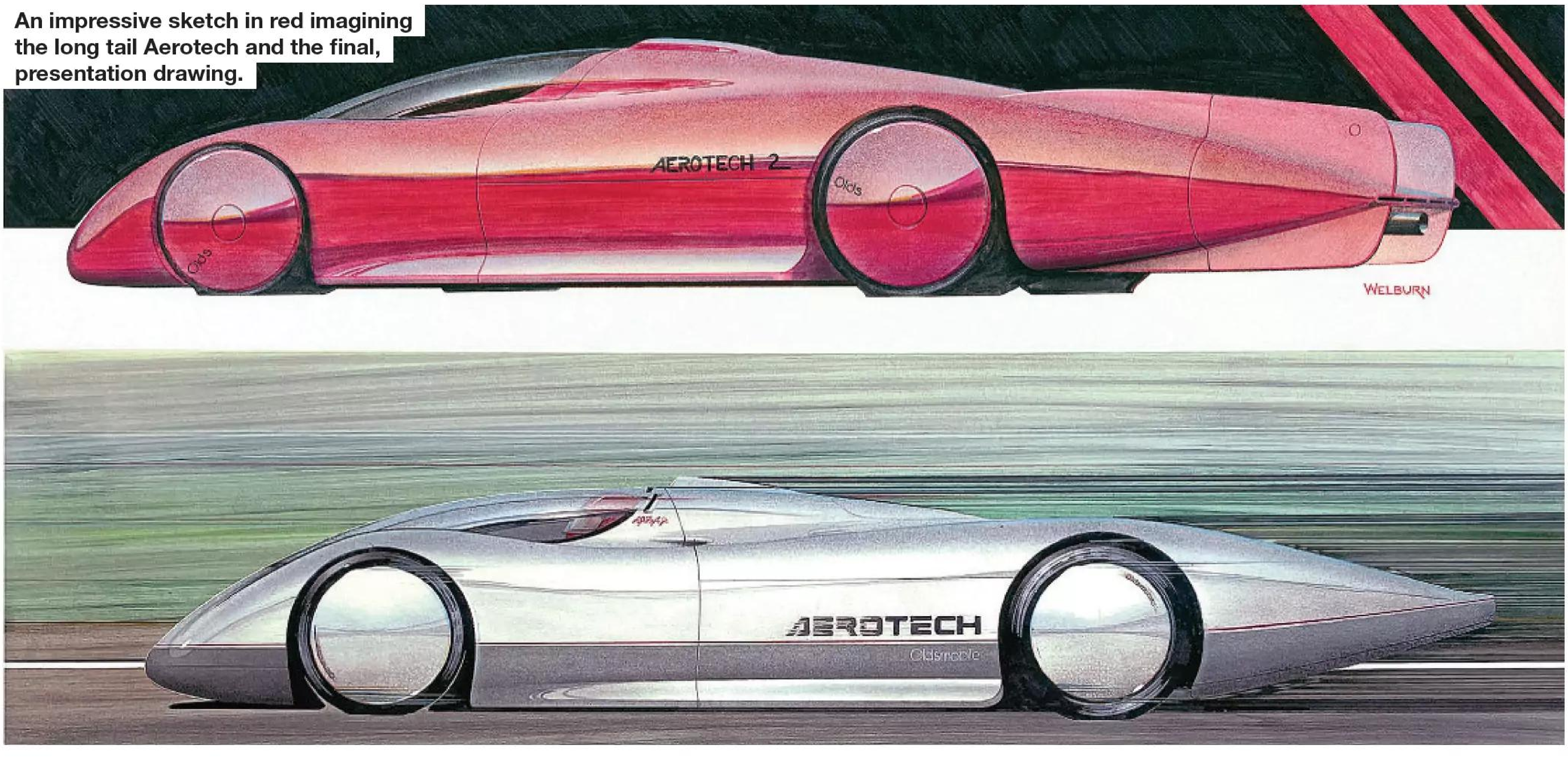

16V QUAD 4 DOHC

'RE' Quad-4 engine was used in the short tail Aerotech built by March.

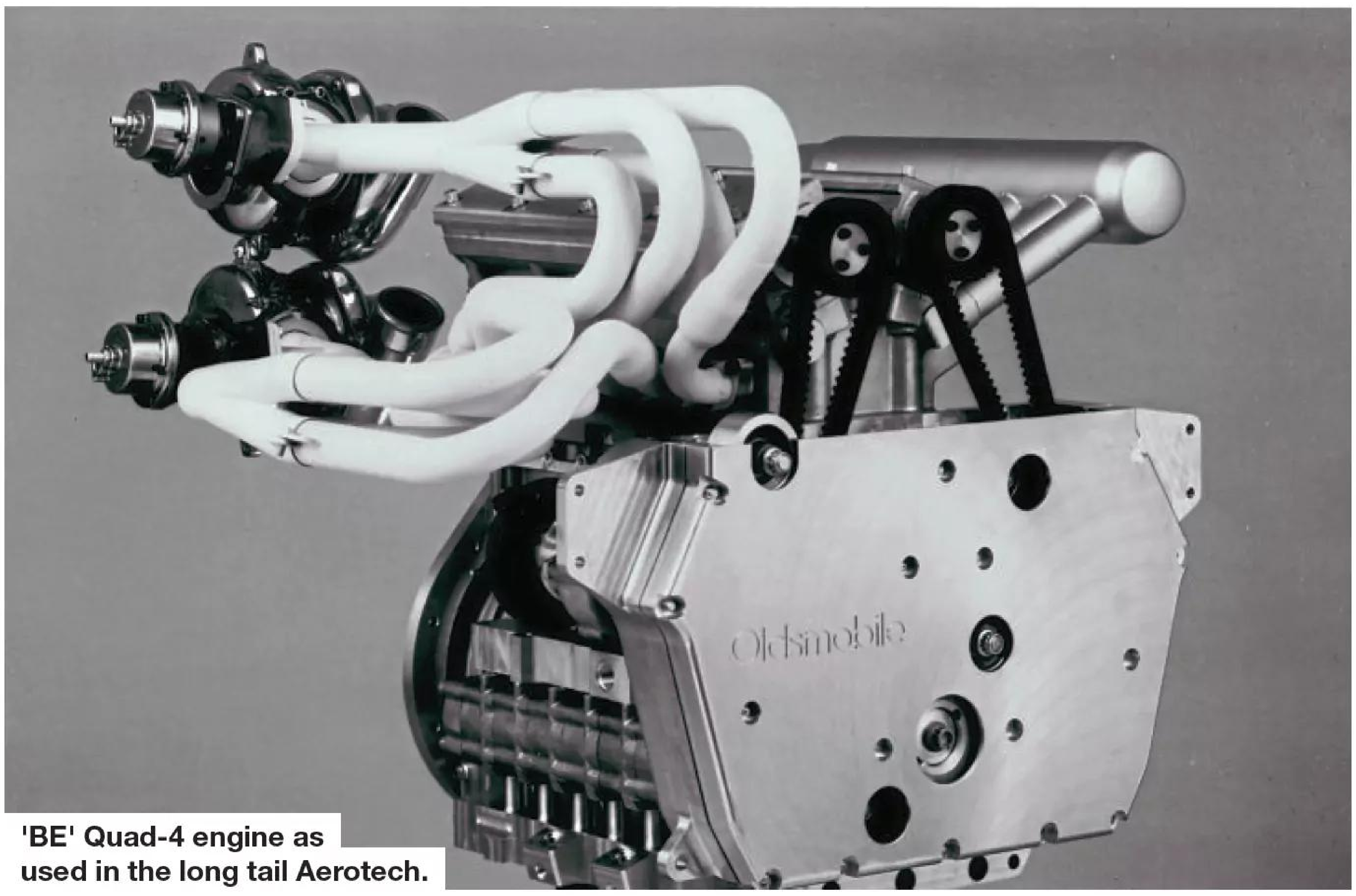
privacy, and a location much closer to the aero team," says Ed.

Most of the aero development took place in the wind tunnel located next to the GM Design Centre in Warren, Michigan. Testing was performed at night because of the added noise of the high speed requirements. They initially put Foyt's Indy car in the tunnel to get a baseline. This car, in superspeedway configuration, had tremendous downforce due to its ground effects underbody and wings, front and rear. But being an open single-seater with exposed wheels and wings it also had a tremendous drag. The goal of Aerotech was to have comparable downforce for lapping Indianapolis, but without the drag.

Aerotech did not have to conform to any rules, therefore its ground-effects tunnels were much larger than the Indy, F1 or even any Group C or Imsa cars of the day. With these large tunnels,


AEROTECH 2
Olds
Olds
WELBURN
AEROTECH
Oldsmobile

An impressive sketch in red imagining the long tail Aerotech and the final, presentation drawing.


'BE' Quad-4 engine as used in the long tail Aerotech.

no exterior wings were needed, therefore its drag was a fraction of that of an Indy car, and that was one of the major reasons for Aerotech's success. The later long-tail, streamliner car was even lower in drag.

Quan, who had already designed the futuristic interiors of the 1983 Buick Questor concept, said: "The Aerotech was my favourite project because it was so blue-sky in terms of technology application with regards to the displays and panels.

"My design process involved a lot of inspiration from military aircraft, science fiction movies (Star Wars back then) and Japanese Robotech toys. We worked with some very progressive engineers from the GM Delco Engineering group of California to develop the working displays. The concept of the access panels came from the requirement of the test engineers that wanted easy access to the data recordings of each lap as a way to fine tune the car's performance for the next lap run. Two

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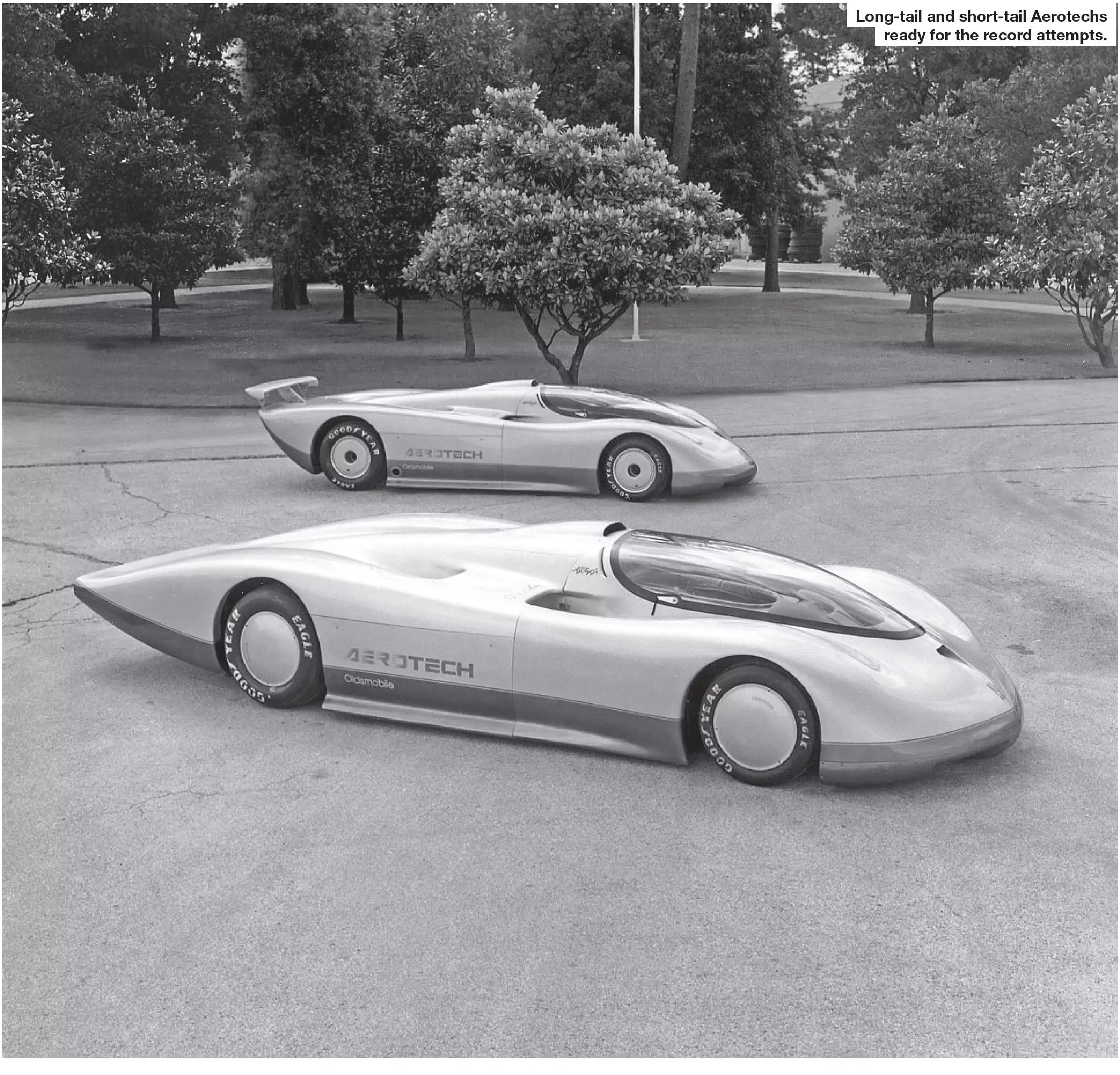

Long-tail and short-tail Aerotechs ready for the record attempts.

integrated cameras were mounted just behind the driver. Two large vents brought in air from the front nose Naca-duct."

Sadly, the use of this highly sophisticated equipment in the very lightweight record cars was finally discarded.

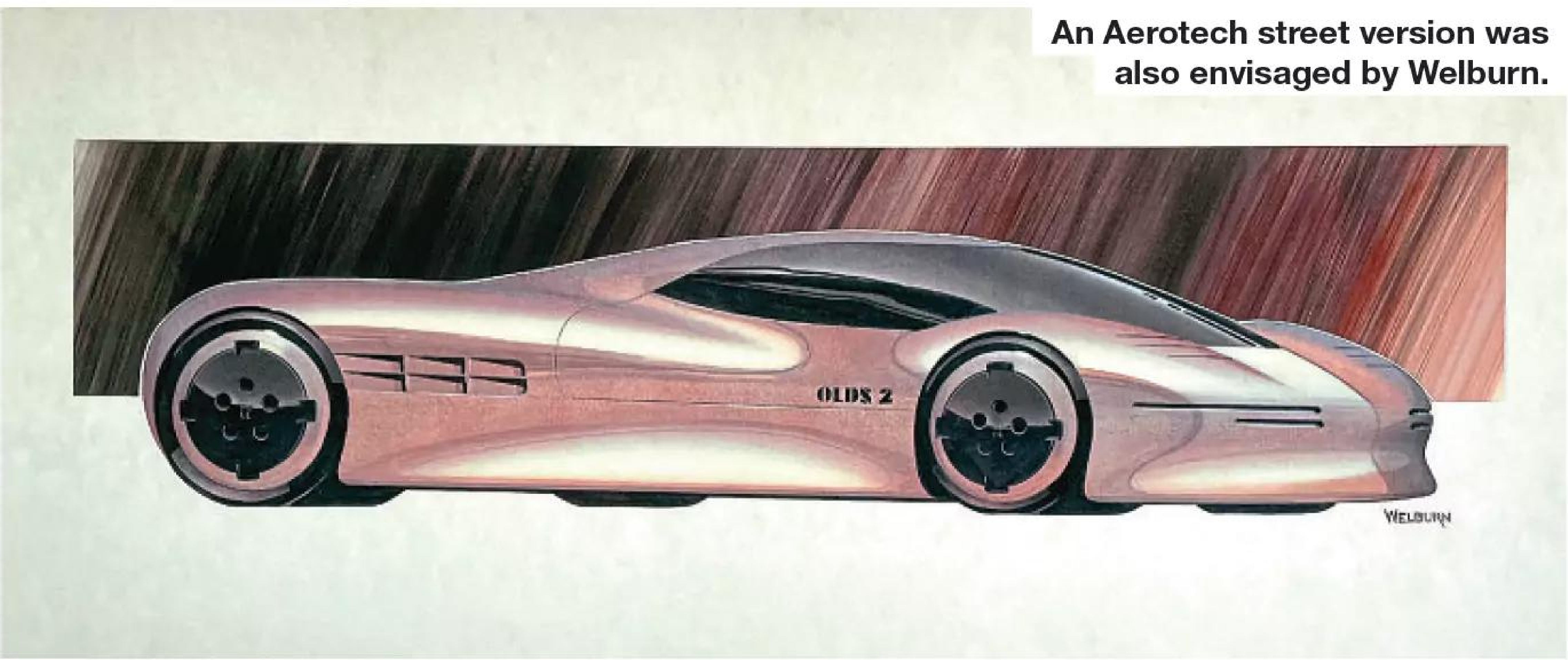
Ed says that it only took 18 months from first sketch to running car, and that actually there were two 1987 running cars built, both to be driven by A J Foyt and fitted with special tyres developed by Goodyear.

March built the first car, which was originally intended to lap the Indianapolis Motor Speedway faster than any Indycar single-seater. It had a carbon-fibre, short-tail body and a matching fully faired underbody featuring adjustable venturi-tunnels. It also had a small and stylish rear wing of a NACA section, mirroring exactly the glass-fibre model's appearance.

The second car, or long-tail one, was built at Jim Feuling's shop in California. It was dressed with bodywork and underbody supplied by March, if not for the streamline long-tail clip, built afterwards as a consequence of getting the approval to run the Aerotech both at the GM Proving Ground in Mesa and the Fort Stockton Test Facility. Both cars used the Robin Herd-designed March 85C aluminium honeycomb/carbon fibre monocoque chassis.

A team of 15 designers headed by Alan Mertens had produced every assembly and detail drawings of Herd's design, with contributions from the up-and-coming Adrian Newey. The 85C type was much lighter than 84C and twice as stiff. Its wheelbase of 111 inches was a very important factor in the design of the Aerotech.

The two cars had Quad 4-derived engines, very different in between, though. These were coupled to a March transverse gearbox as used on Indy car racing on the ST and to a Hewland unit on the LT. March's ST car 2.0 litre Quad 4 RE engine was built by Batten Engineering of Romulus, Michigan. It had a problematic and much delayed set-up phase on the dyno. RE was derived from a Quad 4 production unit and used methanol as fuel. A massive single Garrett turbo compressor and two injectors per cylinder were the RE's distinctive features. Its installation at the back of ST took place at Foyt's workshop, 20 miles north-west of Houston.



An Aerotech street version was also envisaged by Welburn.

ST's completion was overseen there by Hewell 'Hughie' Absalom, the legendary race mechanic, member of March at the time and the person who had built most of the car at March in Bicester.

ST was the car used by Foyt for the world closed-course speed record of 257.124mph at the old Firestone in Fort Stockton 7.712 mile oval test track set on August 27, 1987. This was an unofficial record, since there was no such officially recognised category.

The LT engine, called 'BE', was built by Feuling Engineering in Ventura and was a bi-turbo. Feuling started its design from a clean sheet of paper hiring Rocky Philipp and Keith Black as engineering consultants. Again a 2.0 litre, BE would make 1000hp at slightly under 9500rpm at Fort Stockton for the official measured-mile speed record average of 267.399mph, achieved on that same August 27, 1987.

Foyt had topped 278.357mph through the mile on his counterclockwise lap at Stockton's oval. Stepping down from the car he said he was certain that in more favourable conditions 300mph were achievable; rumour on taking the car to the Bonneville Salt Flats was getting momentum.

Both ST and LT cars were then taken to Indianapolis on October 22, 1987, in an attempt to break the Rick Mears' Speedway lap record of 217.581mph, while of course keeping on with the implicit advanced engineering research of the project.

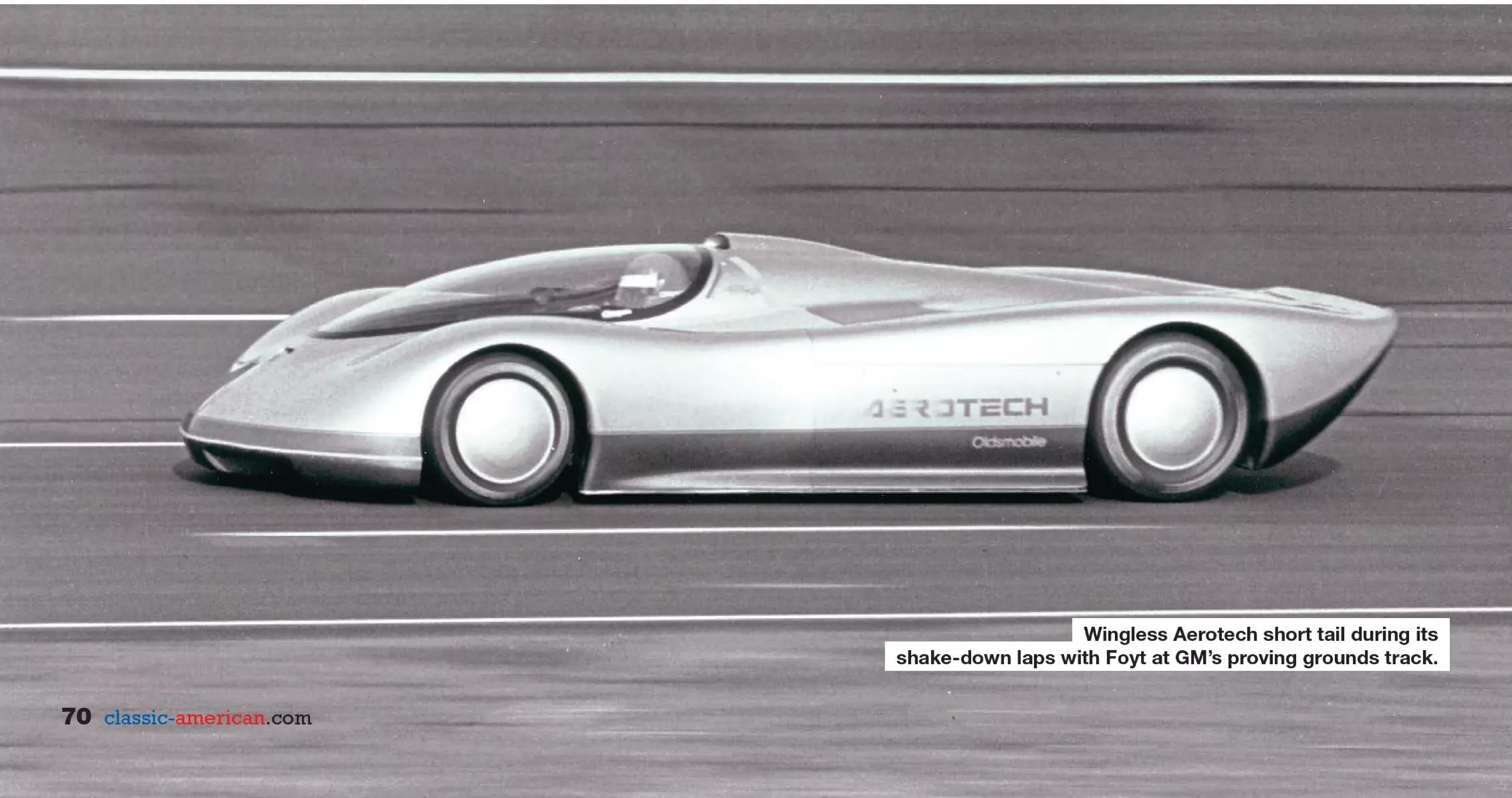
Unfortunately, both cars couldn't go any faster than 189mph due to mechanical problems. A car with a canopy and fenders at speed was a rare sight at Indianapolis.

"If they could find a way to put a couple of doors on them like a sports car, they would sell really well," Foyt quipped, praising how comfortably and safely one runs at the track in such a car.

He probably was not aware that Welburn had been working on subsequent sketches of an Aerotech two-seater street car variant, a flight of fancy which, in the end, could never win against the strong will of Chevrolet to finally pursue its own mid-engine Corvette street car, evidenced at the time by its magnificent 1986-1988 Indy and 1990 Cerv III running concepts.

Despite the problems and setbacks to be expected, Aerotech had fulfilled its promise and it was now time to turn the page. ★

Thanks to Ed Welburn, Christo Datini and Larry Kinsel of General Motors; William Quan, Matt Katz; David Reeves, Hughie Absalom, Tino Belli and Andy Beuling of March.



Wingless Aerotech short tail during its shake-down laps with Foyt at GM's proving grounds track.

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EVENTS 2025

Shows highlighted in white are Car of the Year events

June

12-15
RACE THE WAVES
Vintage Beach-Race Weekend at Bridlington. Bridlington will once again become a paradise for Petrolheads from June 12-15. It is the only vintage motoring event of its kind in the UK with two days of social gatherings topped off with two days of 'racing the waves' down the beautiful South Beach. Typically, the one-eighth of a mile races are started by a lady waving a chequered flag.

The racers can either opt to organise themselves or arrive at the starting line and go with the flow. Gentlemanly behaviour is paramount for these 'grudge-races' and after a full weekend racing everyone returns home as a winner. From the inception of what is now their sixth return to Bridlington, their 'man on the microphone' Graham Beckwith will exhale his vast array of anecdotes from the UKs drag-racing scene, along with the details of the runners and riders. The number of races each day is huge, with little time between each fall of the flag. Cars and vehicles leave the starting line in pairs, whilst motorcycles leave in groups of four or five. International interest is keen too, with entries accepted from Europe and one arrived from the USA. The 2025 race entry opened December 31 and was oversubscribed by mid-January.

Race The Waves draws on an eclectic mix of influences from the earliest UK Motoring Speed Trials held on the Yorkshire beaches from 1905, to the postwar American Desert and Street Drag-Races. Cars/vehicles and motorcycles are in the main American and European manufacture, with cars from the 1920s-1960s and motorcycles from the 1920s to the mid-Seventies. Accompanying the two-day beach races are two auto shows, one above the beach on a closed road and a second around the lifeboat station on the promenade. Along the promenade and overlooking the beach the event is supported by a number of traders to keep the food and drinks flowing. The whole weekend event is FREE to attend for visitors and supported by the East Riding of Yorkshire Council Tourism Dept, Visit East Yorkshire. For more information see: www.backfireinfo.weebly.com

15
BEAULIEU ROD & CUSTOM SHOW
The South's biggest Custom & American Show returns on Father's Day and features hundreds of cool, colourful, custom cars, live music and hip entertainment throughout the day! Hot rods, customs, American muscle, chops and bobbers will be among the hundreds of vehicles on display. You can expect a stunning display of American motors. From classic Camaros to modern Mustangs, can you spot your dream car? If you own a hot rod, custom, American vehicle, custom bike or pre-1980 classic and want to display it at the show, more details will be announced on how to do so soon.

Tickets and prices: Participant prices are only valid if arriving in a qualifying vehicle and taking part in the event. They are not valid for those arriving on foot. Standard admission fee applies for all other visitors. Cars cannot leave and re-enter the grounds for the event without a further fee being paid to cover all occupants. For prices or to order see: www.beaulieu.co.uk As well as being an opportunity to see hundreds of cool custom cars, there is also the opportunity to enjoy all that Beaulieu has to offer… Your entry will include admission to all the Beaulieu attractions including The National Motor Museum, World of Top Gear, Little Beaulieu, Palace House, Beaulieu Abbey and more.

Dragstalgia, Santa Pod, 2022.

22
THE BRIGHTON RUN
The run leaves Starbucks, 119 Brighton Road, Surrey, RH1 3AL on the A23 around 11.30am, on to M23 towards Gatwick, pull into Pease Pottage services Junction 11 12pm-ish to meet up with others, leave 12.30-ish and head for Brighton, regrouping on the way, head for Roedean Cafe, just along the coast road past the marina. This is a cruise not a race, so keep the speed down, try to keep together and enjoy the day. When at the Roedean please do not park or drive across the putting green. Contact Derek 07724 752512.

27-29
National Hot Rod, Custom and American Show Lincolnshire Showground. Pre-1980 showfield, Best in Britain Marquee, rally car rides, lowriders, monster truck rides, stunt plane acrobatics, wrestling, live band daytime stage, extreme bike stunt show, trade stands, tattoo convention, night-time live music, plus rave room, silent disco, funfair, food stands and bars. Weekend tickets only, see: www.hotrodandcustomshow.co.uk

27-29
DRAGSTALGIA
Santa Pod Raceway, Northamptonshire. A vintage lifestyle weekend dedicated to race cars, bikes and hot rods from a bygone era. See vehicles from Santa Pod's illustrious history return to the strip while enjoying Championship racing, live music, jet car, show 'n' shine with the NSRA, Cracklefest, beer festival and much more. Camping available on site so come for the weekend. For more information and to book, please visit www.dragstalgia.co.uk or Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants NN29 7XA, England. Tel: 01234 782828, International tel: +44 1234 782828, or see: www.santapod.co.uk

July

4-5
POWER BIG MEET
Power Big Meet # 46, biggest car show for American cars.
Hovby airport, Lidkoping, Sweden.
For more info call +46 707962757 / or email: Info@bigmeet.com
Event website: http://www.bigmeet.com

4-6
MPH DRAGS #3
Deenthorpe Airfield, Corby. 1/8 mile drag racing Saturday and Sunday. Bands and DJs Friday and Saturday night. Limited weekend camping and race tickets. Sunday only spectator tickets. For more info see: www.mphdrags.co.uk

5-6
SUMMER NATIONALS
National Drag Racing Championships featuring the Motorsport UK British Championship for Pro Mod. A huge variety of race cars and bikes will keep the track action-packed all day long including a jet car. Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants NN29 7XA, England. Tel: 01234 782828, International tel: +44 1234 782828, or see: www.santapod.co.uk

5&6
THE *CLASSIC AMERICAN* STARS & STRIPES SHOW
Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 6QN. The *Classic American* Stars & Stripes Car Show, which has been running for more than 30 years, returns to Tatton Park again this summer. Celebrating all things American, from Mustangs to Corvettes and Cadillacs to American motorhomes. The show promises a superb line-up of acts and entertainment for a fun-filled weekend. Expect to see hundreds of vehicles from across the pond to browse and admire, from pre-war classics to brand-new super cars… Stars & Stripes has it all!

There's also specialist traders, parts suppliers and auto jumble stands. The organisers like to make sure visitors are well fed and watered, so there's everything from standards like fish and chips, ice cream and burgers, to more exotic offerings like noodles and Mexican food – there's something for everyone. This year's special attractions include firing-up sessions, an eating competition, Scalextric slot car racing and a Best Dressed Award.

Daily admission: adults: £11.50 in advance/£14 on the gate, 16 years and under: free. Tickets are available to purchase on the gate. Parking: cars, motorbikes, minibuses: £8.10 parking charge per vehicle for Tatton Park (must be purchased in advance to qualify for 10% discount) or full rate/on the day Tatton parking charge of £9! Blue badge holders: £4, pre-booked coaches: free to enter. Please note: There is an entry fee of £8 for access to Tatton Park (this is a separate fee to the entry to the show tickets). Open daily 9.30am-4pm. For more info see www.tattonstarsandstripes.com

10-13
GOODWOOD FESTIVAL OF SPEED
Held in the beautiful parkland surrounding Goodwood House, Festival of Speed presented by Mastercard is motorsport's ultimate summer garden party, an intoxicating celebration of the world's most glamorous sport. See: www.goodwood.com

11-13
SANTA POD MUSTANG NATIONALS WEEKEND
Friday, July 11: Enjoy our dedicated club day with exclusive racing sessions. Use code MOCGB25 on the Santa Pod ticket website to unlock the Friday race booking link.
Saturday, July 12: It's all about Mustangs, on the track and in the main display area.
Sunday, July 13: The event concludes with the Ford Show, featuring a vast array of Ford vehicles.
Based on feedback from the successful 2024 event, Santa Pod, SMUK and MOCGB are bringing back this incredible three-day event with exciting new additions:

- Dedicated Mustang camping.
- Massive static display.
- Enhanced racing sessions managed by experienced racers.
- Show and shine judging with trophies and prizes.
- Special guests, including 'Smallest Cog' and TV cars.
- An Auto Test course to showcase your driving skills.
- Stunt displays …. and more!

11-13
THE NATIONAL STREET VAN ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL TRUCK-IN
The event is being held at the Drum and Monkey,

Continues on page 74

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Dragstalgia, Santa Pod, 2022.

Gloucester Road, Upton upon Severn, WR8 0QP from Friday, July 11 to Sunday, July 13 inclusive. There will be things going on all weekend: Friday and Saturday evening disco, live band on Saturday evening along with Blues Brothers fancy dress and also a light show. Mobile bar serving alcohol, coffee and snacks. The pub is available for food and drink. Sunday will be the show 'n' shine with trophies awarded for various van classes. All American, classic and custom vans welcome. Details can be on the club's website: www.nsva.co.uk or their Facebook page.

13
TUCKER'S AMERICANA
Now into our third year – join us for an all American, hot rod, custom car and bike show. Food, bar, trade stands, fairground and live music. Open from 10am-4pm.
Eternit Sports and Leisure, Whaddon Road, Meldreth, Royston, SG8 5RL.
Event Phone: 07756 494334, email: tuckersamericana@yahoo.com
Website: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089888996398

18-20
31ST MOPAR EURONATS
Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants, NN29 7XA, The Ultimate American Muscle Car show with RWYB for American cars only, drag racing, show 'n' shine, wheelie contest, live music, traders and camping. Whether you have a modified or classic American car or truck, come along to the largest muscle car door slammer event in Europe. Sunday will see a gigantic show 'n' shine in the car corral and at lunchtime the wheelie contest. The best muscle car show in the UK has just got bigger! Don't miss this petrolhead experience, get those tickets today. Camping available onsite so come for the weekend, all American car clubs welcome. Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants, NN29 7XA, England. Tel: 01234 782828, International Tel: +44 1234 782828, or see: www.santapod.co.uk

19-20
American Auto Club Summer Nationals
Held in conjunction with the fabulous Upton Blues Festival Saturday, July 19 and Sunday, July 20. At Upton RFC ground. Separate camping area with huge discounts for club members camping. Camping available from July 16 to July 21. Contact Clare Sharp for details, on 07881 404449 camping must be prebooked. Trophies on both show days, arena drive through, children's events, traders. Cruise through Upton town centre Saturday and Sunday late afternoon. American vehicles £5 per day. Open to all American cars, vans, trucks and motorcycles. Show cars must be on site by 11am. Public car park £10 per day. Upton upon Severn is easy to find, close to M5/M50 intersection the A38 and M5 Junction 7. Blues Fest biggest and best in the UK. All music is free, three main stages, all genres of blues. For further details contact Steven Harrigan 07890 406115.

26
MOCGB NATIONAL SHOW
This year's MOCGB National Show will be held at Statfold Country Park, Telford (B79 0BU), a family-friendly venue packed with attractions. The event opens at 10am, with exclusive entry rates for MOCGB members:

- £5 per car (valid membership card required) for up to four occupants.
- Non-members driving a Mustang or other American display cars: £10 per car with up to four occupants.
- Regular public entry price is: £20 per person. Family two adults and two kids £67.50

Features include:

- Concours judging with category trophies
- Massive static car display in dedicated parking area
- Dog-friendly policy (on leads)
- Raffle with some amazing prizes worth £100s
- Unlimited steam train rides on both the 2ft and miniature railway
- Licensed bars and restaurants.
- Access to the Round House Museum, home of the largest collection of narrow-gauge locomotives
- Access to the National Fairground Museum with vintage swing chair and fairground rides
- Woodland walks in Mease Valley Woods
- Mini golf
- Inflatables
- Gift shop
- Kids soft play (subject to availability)
- Clip 'n' climb (subject to availability)
- Retro roller skating

Learn more about Statfold Country Park at www.statfold.com

26
American Car and Hot Rod Day
Weymouth Esplanade, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 8NG. A day for up to 50 left-hand-drive cars and hot rods right on the Esplanade, Weymouth. Entrants need to be on site before 9.45am and can't leave until 4.30pm. Pre-registration ONLY via www.dorsetcarclub.com. Vehicles must pre-register, as we are limited to 50 cars. Phone: 07887744163, email: dorsetcarclub@gmail.com or see: website: www.dorsetcarclub.com

August

1-3
THE HOT ROD HAYRIDE
Bisley Shooting Centre, Surrey GU24 0NY. The Hot Rod Hayride is the UK's biggest and best-loved event for traditional hot rods and customs. An all-action weekend featuring a pre-1966 show field, oval dirt-track racing, hot bands and DJs, late-nite club sessions, wall of death, specialist vintage traders, flea market and autojumble, soap box derby and more. Visit www.HotRodHayride.co.uk for full details.

3
RALLY OF THE GIANTS
The AAAC's new Oxfordshire venue has so much on offer, with the house and chapel dating back to 1280 with a 17th century brick wall garden and parks that nestle within 250 acres of grounds. There's plenty to occupy the children too, with the Tumblestone Hollow Adventure play area. All the American cars will be displayed and can be viewed on lawned grass in front of the magnificent Stonor House, where you will meet knowledgeable and friendly enthusiasts. The legendary Rally of the Giants never disappoints; it's an opportunity to see a wide variety of American vehicles ranging from 1920s up to present day. One of the best American car shows of the year. Stonor Park, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire RG9 6HF. The All American Auto Club, contact: John@Allacc.com

7-10
HOT ROD SUPER NATIONALS
Old Warden, Bedfordshire. Get ready for the ultimate hot rod and custom extravaganza at the Hot Rod Supernationals! Taking place from August 1 to 4, this event is the biggest of its kind this side of the pond. Featuring the largest show of pre '73 hot rods and customs, alongside yanks and classics, it's a must-attend for any gear head. But that's not all – enjoy a full area of trade, a fun fair, and not one, but two live stages of entertainment to keep the party going all weekend long. Plus, NSRA members enjoy discounted entry. For more information see: www.nsra.org.uk

16
REDHILL DREAM CRUISE
From 7pm. Head for RH1 1NP – the onus is definitely on old school Chelsea/Swedish style cruising the streets in classic American cars and trucks. There is a town centre route and a longer scenic route both of which fully overlap… there are plenty of eateries and vista points around town which will be signposted this year. Check out Instagram and Facebook for latest info! Keep it low and slow!

16-17
GREENLIGHT NATIONALS
National Drag Racing Championship event in the peak of the British summer, with a huge variety of race cars and bikes that will keep the track action-packed all day long. NO ACCESS to UK Monster Truck Nationals on Sunday. Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants NN29 7XA, England. Tel: 01234 782828, International tel: +44 1234 782828, or see: www.santapod.co.uk

24
BRISTOL AMERICAN CAR SHOW
Event Address: Keynsham Rugby Club, Keynsham, Bristol. Postcode: BS31 2BE.
Bristol American Car Show is a well-established show that has grown considerably over the last 25 years. There's always a great cross-section of American classic cars, hot rods and customs. So why don't you join them at this friendly and popular event.

September

4-7
EURO FINALS
Santa Pod's most prestigious drag racing event featuring more than 250 of Europe's finest teams. Witness the awesome power of 300mph top fuel dragsters, 200mph drag bikes and more than 20 supporting classes. See the famous jet car, monster trucks, stunt shows, static displays, air displays, traders and more. Camping available on site so come for the weekend. Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants NN29 7XA, England. Tel: 01234 782828, International tel: +44 1234 782828, or see: www.santapod.co.uk

6-7
PETROLHEADONISM LIVE
Special guest: Dave Kindig. See: www.petrolheadonism.club

7
THE JOHN HAYNES CLASSIC
Haynes Motor Museum, Sparkford, near Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7LH. This new event pays tribute to John Haynes OBE, creator of Haynes manuals and founder of the museum. The event will feature the Haynes Manual Display, a curated collection of cars and motorcycles immortalised in the famous Haynes Manuals, which have guided countless DIY enthusiasts around the world.

The show will also incorporate the Car Club Arena, which will provide a stunning showcase for hundreds of veteran, vintage and classic cars and motorcycles. The Live Show Paddock will bring motoring history to life with talks, debates, live music, and a special vehicle parade. Families and budding engineers will enjoy the Discovery Zone, where workshops, demonstrations and interactive activities will be available for adults and children alike. Adding to the festivities, the South Somerset Artisan Market will feature a variety of local food, drink, and produce, showcasing the best of regional talent and providing a delicious taste of the area. For more information call 01963 440804 or visit: www.haynesmotormuseum.org or www.johnhaynesclassic.co.uk

12-14
HOT ROD DRAGS
Now celebrating the 37th annual Original Hot Rod Drags, supported by the NSRA. It's a hot rod show at the racetrack! The usual, 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' formula with Pre-'73 RWYB, invited race classes, Wild Bunch, fireworks and much more. See you at the track. Camping available on site so come for the weekend. Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants NN29 7XA, England. Tel: 01234 782828, International Tel: +44 1234 782828, or see: www.santapod.co.uk

19-21
National Drag Racing Championship Finals headlined by the wild 250mph Pro Mod doorslammers! See more than 20 supporting classes including ACU Championship Drag Bikes,

Dragstalgia, Santa Pod, 2022.

Junior Dragsters and many more. Camping available on site so come for the weekend. Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants NN29 7XA, England. Tel: 01234 782828, International tel: +44 1234 782828, or see: www.santapod.co.uk

28
FORT PAULL AMERICAN ROD & CUSTOM CAR SHOW END OF SEASON BASH
Held at Fort Paull, Battery Road, Paull, near Hull, HU12 8FP. Open to cars/trucks/bikes and anything of interest. Hosted by Yorkshire American Car Club (YANCS) est. 1982. Main show day is Sunday, gate opens at 8.30am for exhibitors and 10am for the public. Dogs are welcome. There is weekend camping for exhibitors from Friday noon, bar Friday night and disco and party Saturday night. For further details see Facebook or email: yancs1@yahoo.co.uk or call: 01709 542555.

26-28
WEST YORKSHIRE HOT RODS AND HORSEPOWER 9
Open to the public only on Sunday 28. Prestented by Flatcaps and Ferrets. Elland Sports Club, Hullen Road, Elland, West Yorkshire HX5 0QY. Expect to see hot rods, classics, customs, American, lowriders, retro rides, bikes 'n' trikes and much more. Adults £5, concessions £2.50. Full weekend of events for exhibitors only, including live music, late bar and food. A cruise out, DJ and fancy dress party on Saturday (purple/rock/steam punk theme). Sunday: food stalls, all day bar, trade village, children's entertainment and rides, dragster fire-up, show 'n' shine and prize-giving. Indoor Ink & Retro, including retro clothing, incense stalls, ink and piercings. Weekend camping for exhibitors and trade. Call Russ on 07768 071916 or Les on 07745 211544. Exhibitors only on Friday and Saturday.

October

5
BICESTER SCRAMBLE
9am-2pm. Bicester Heritage Centre, Buckingham Road, Bicester, Oxon OX27 8AL. Round out the scramble season on Sunday, October 5, taking place between 9am and 4pm at Bicester Motion. Full details of the main displays will be announced ahead of the event. Tickets available online. For more information see: www.bicesterheritage.co.uk/scramble

9-13
RHYTHM RIOT!
Vauxhall Holiday Park, Acle New Road, Norfolk NR30 1TB
Four days and nights of 1950s music, dancing and vintage lifestyle, with a huge lineup of the world best bands and DJs playing in three great venues. With a spectacular classic car cruise, vintage clothing mall, tropical pool party, jam session, hair and beauty parlour, rockin' barber, tattoo shop, indoor flea market and lots more… including a free 1956 shuttle bus service to and from Great Yarmouth, so even those without a car can get to ride in style! Stay in comfort at the five-star Vauxhall Holiday Park and enjoy an action-packed weekend. Full details and online booking at www.RhythmRiot.com or call 020 8566 5226 for information.

26
NSRA NORTHERN SWAPMEET
Get ready for one of the largest autojumble with a focus on hot rod and American car parts in Europe – the NSRA Northern Swap Meet. At the NSRA Northern Swap Meet, gearheads and enthusiasts alike gather to buy, sell and trade automotive treasures. Whether you're on the hunt for rare parts to complete your project or looking for a bargain, this event has something for everyone.
Why attend?

- Vast selection: Discover an extensive array of Hot Rod and American car parts.
- Sell your treasures: Reserve a pitch to showcase and sell your automotive goodies.
- Great deals: Score incredible bargains on parts, accessories, and memorabilia.
- NSRA member benefits: NSRA members enjoy discounted entry and pitch fees.

See: www.nsra.org.uk for more information.

November

7-9
Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show
NEC, Birmingham. The UK's largest indoor classic event held in several halls and also the closing car show of the season. Expect to see celebrity stages, restoration demonstrations, car clubs galore, autojumble and just about anything you could imagine for your classic. The Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show, which brings together a great array of classic car and motorcycle clubs along with their iconic classic and vintage cars and motorbikes, is an event not to be missed. No matter what you're looking for, this is the ultimate season finale for any classic car/bike owner, collector, enthusiast, club member, or simply anyone with a passion for classic vehicles!

But it's not just about the classics on display. As well as admiring these amazing vehicles, you can shop for those elusive pieces in the autojumble, or source parts and tools for your maintenance and restoration needs from the many specialist traders. Looking for something to fill that classic-shaped hole in your life? You'll find an outstanding range on offer from the dealers and at Iconic Auctioneers. Then there are all the activities you can enjoy. Hear talks from motoring celebrities and experts, learn from specialists throughout the halls, or drive out in unique classics with HERO-ERA or Sporting Bears, helping them raise money for some brilliant children's charities. For more information see: www.necclassicmotorshow.com for more information.

Cruises

LONDON
Chelsea Cruise, monthly meet, Chelsea Bridge/Battersea Park, last Saturday of every month from 7pm, Derek 07724 752512.

ACE CAFE
Hot rod nights - 6pm-10.30pm:
CA readers may be interested to note that in addition to the cafe's annual free to attend one-off 'American' events:
1) "All American Cruise In" - the last Saturday of each month
DJ Rockin' Wolf at the Ace, spinning the wax every month from 7pm
2)"All American Bike Night (Harley & Indian)" - on the last Thursday of each month

KRISPY KREME NEW MALDEN
10am (or maybe a little earlier) at Krispy Kreme, Shannon Corner, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4NA for hot rods, coffee and doughnuts! 20th Anniversary Meet was celebrated on Easter Sunday. Search Krispy Kreme Cruise Surrey on Facebook for details. Future meetings: June 15, July 20, August 17, September 21, October 19, November 16 and December 21.

MIDLANDS
Coleshill Auto Breakfast Meet, last Sunday of every month from 9am starting March 2025. Classic cars, trucks and bikes all welcome. Held at Triumph Factory Visitor Experience Centre, Normandy Way, Hinckley LE10 3BZ. Dates as follows: June 29 – Big Day Out; July 27, 9-1pm; August 24, 9-1pm; September 28, 9-1pm. For more information see Facebook.

WILTSHIRE
American Cars Wiltshire meet on the second Sunday of each month, all year round, at The Milk Churn, Commerce Way, Melksham, SN12 6AD from noon to 2.30pm. Open to all owners/enthusiasts of American, or American powered, hot rods, customs, bikes, or anything interesting and old (pre-'82). Please call Mike on 07709 101162, or text Simon on: 07809365822. Venue 1225 706496
https://www.facebook.com › groups › 195632271030120

WALES
Swansea American Autos/AACUK/Corvette Owners Club UK (Western Region) Brunch Meet. Third Sunday of the month (March-October) 11am-2pm. Baglan Industrial Park, Port Talbot, SA12 7DJ (near Neath Port Talbot Hospital). An informal meeting of American vehicle owners with free entry, food vendor, giveaways and toilet facilities. For more details visit facebook.com/swanseaamericanautos, Tel: 07815 701922 or email popscarhire@hotmail.com

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Shows highlighted in white are Car of the Year events.

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EVENT REPORT

NSRA NOSTALGIA NATIONALS

Santa Pod Raceway
May 2-4

Words and photography: AF Photography

Raceway
KESTREL BEER
Haltech
RACE WINNING
Santa Pod Raceway
Dodge

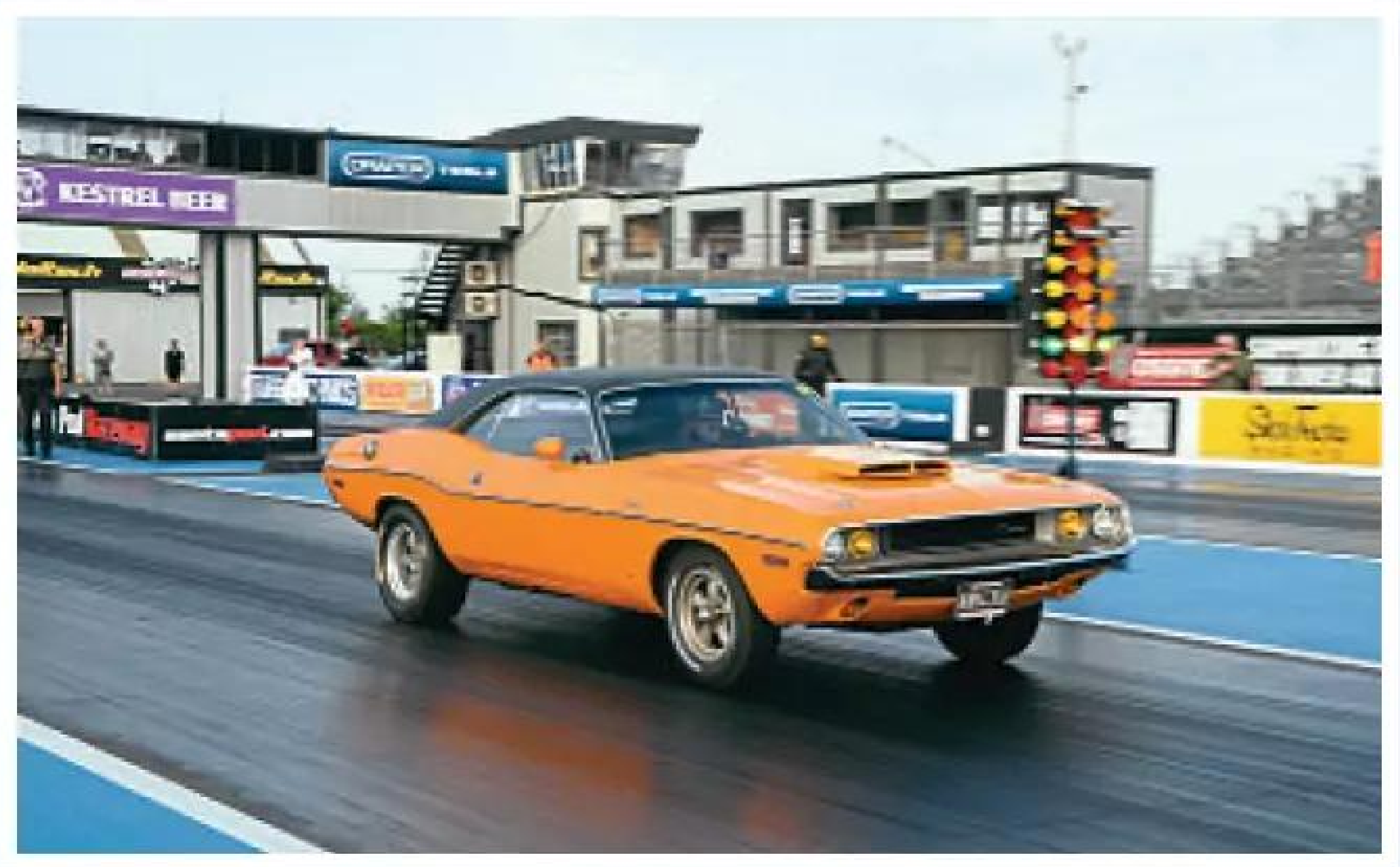
Summer starting means… racing! For those of us that enjoy the nostalgia scene our summer starts with Nostalgia Nationals at Santa Pod Raceway in conjunction with the NSRA. Most racers arrived Thursday ready for a good day's testing on Friday. When Friday came the sun gave us the best it had, with clear blue skies all day which continued through most of the weekend. Even better for those racers, there was a rare tail wind on track all weekend, making for some great racing, with lots of racers in all the classes running new personal bests.

Off track there was plenty to look at, with club display/camping, traders and autojumble, live music in the evenings and pit access open to everyone – don't forget when visiting Santa Pod you can walk around the pits with no extra charge, so go and say hi to your favourite racer. Both Saturday and Sunday there was show 'n' shine organised by the NSRA, with some quality cars on show.

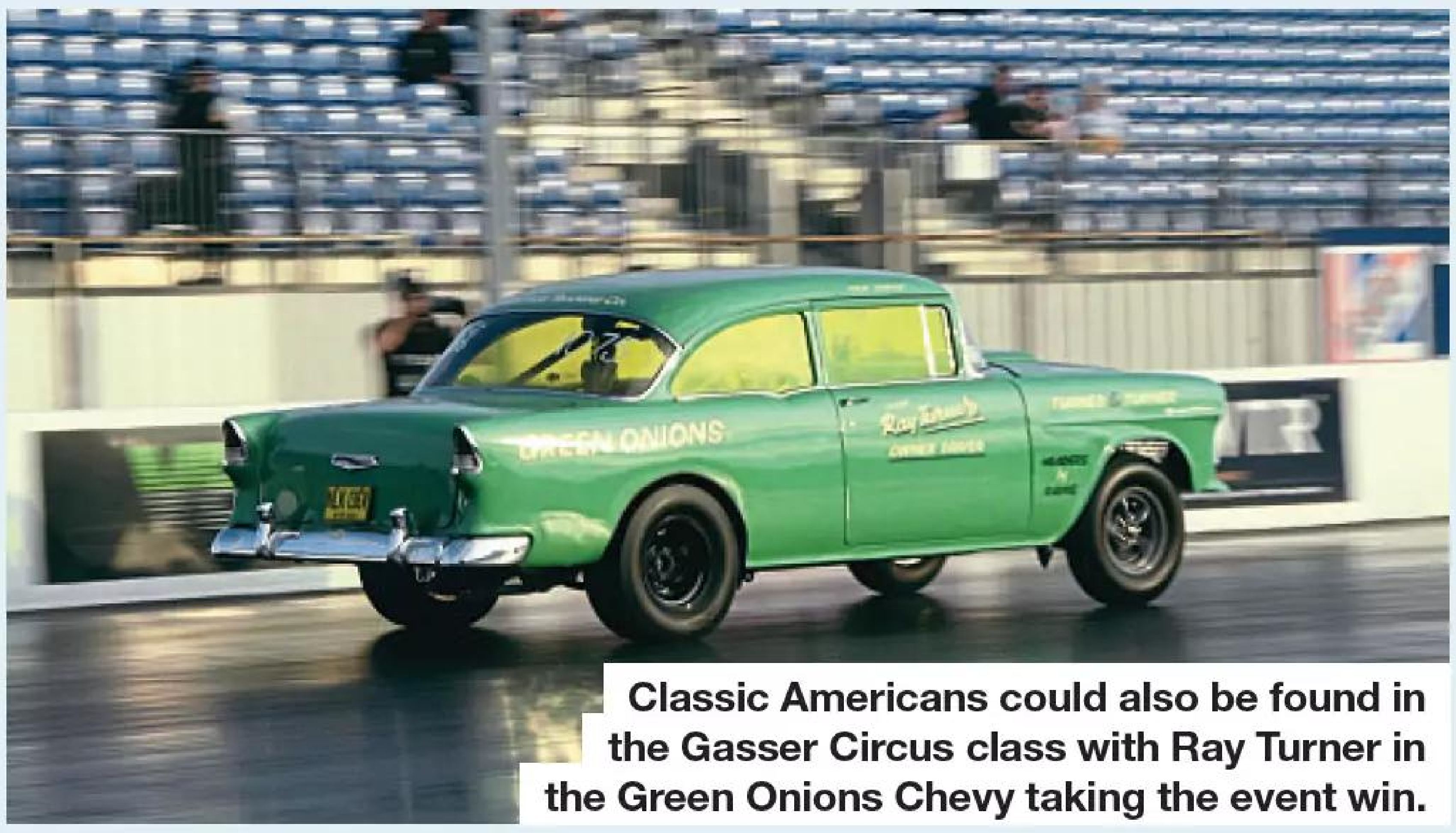
Back on track all classes had four rounds of qualifying, with Jim Smith taking the number one spot with a perfect run in Nostalgia Super Stock, closely followed by Adrian Portelli in second and Dave Billadeau in third.

Qualifying gives you an indication of who will do well on race day as Jim Smith did make it through to the final; however, the event win went to Harvey Turner in his Chevy wagon who qualified not so ideally in the bottom half, but it's what you do on race day that matters.

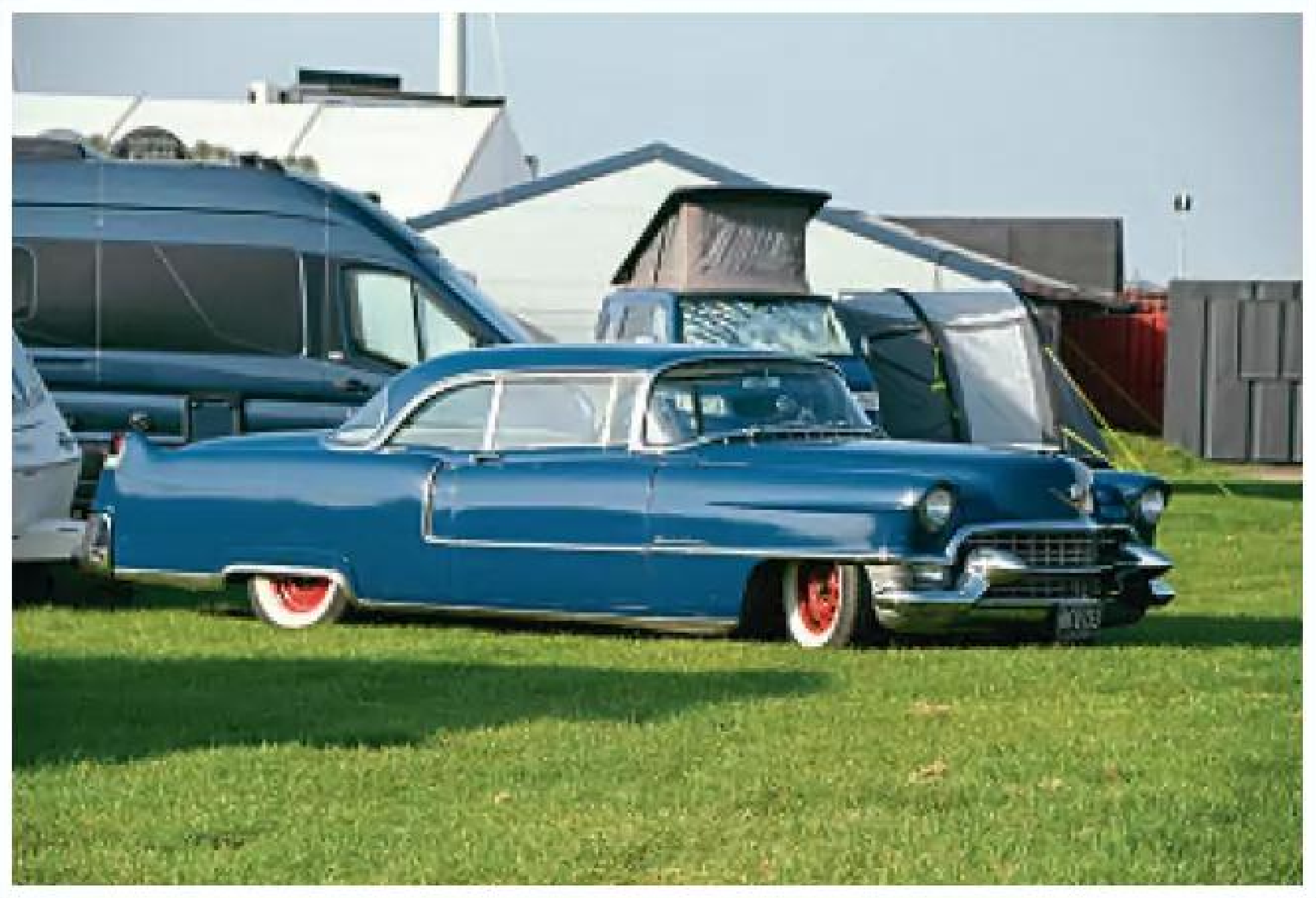
Well done to everyone over the weekend and as always, a huge shout out to the fabulous Santa crew on and off track for keeping the event running like clockwork.



Station wagons seem to be more and more popular.



Classic Americans could also be found in the Gasser Circus class with Ray Turner in the Green Onions Chevy taking the event win.



Walk round the pits and you'll find some lovely line-ups.

SANTA POD RACEWAY
Santa Pod

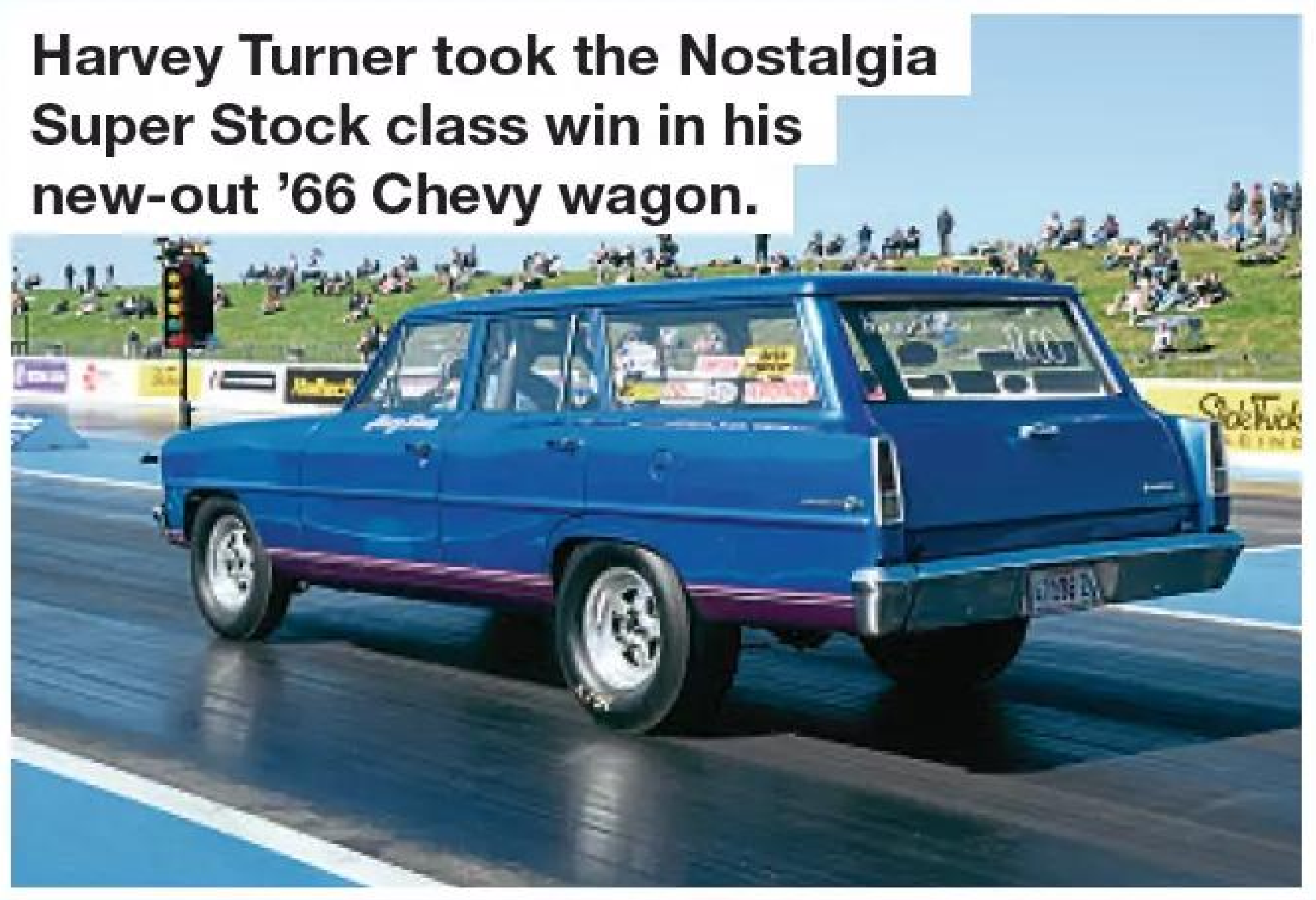
GREEN ONIONS

With 40 Nostalgia
Super Stock racers entered,
the pairing lanes were chock-a-block.

SANTA POD RACEWAY
Santa Pod
Slick Tricks RACING
Raceway
Smitty's AUTO REPAIR
JIM SMITH
TURBO TECHNICS

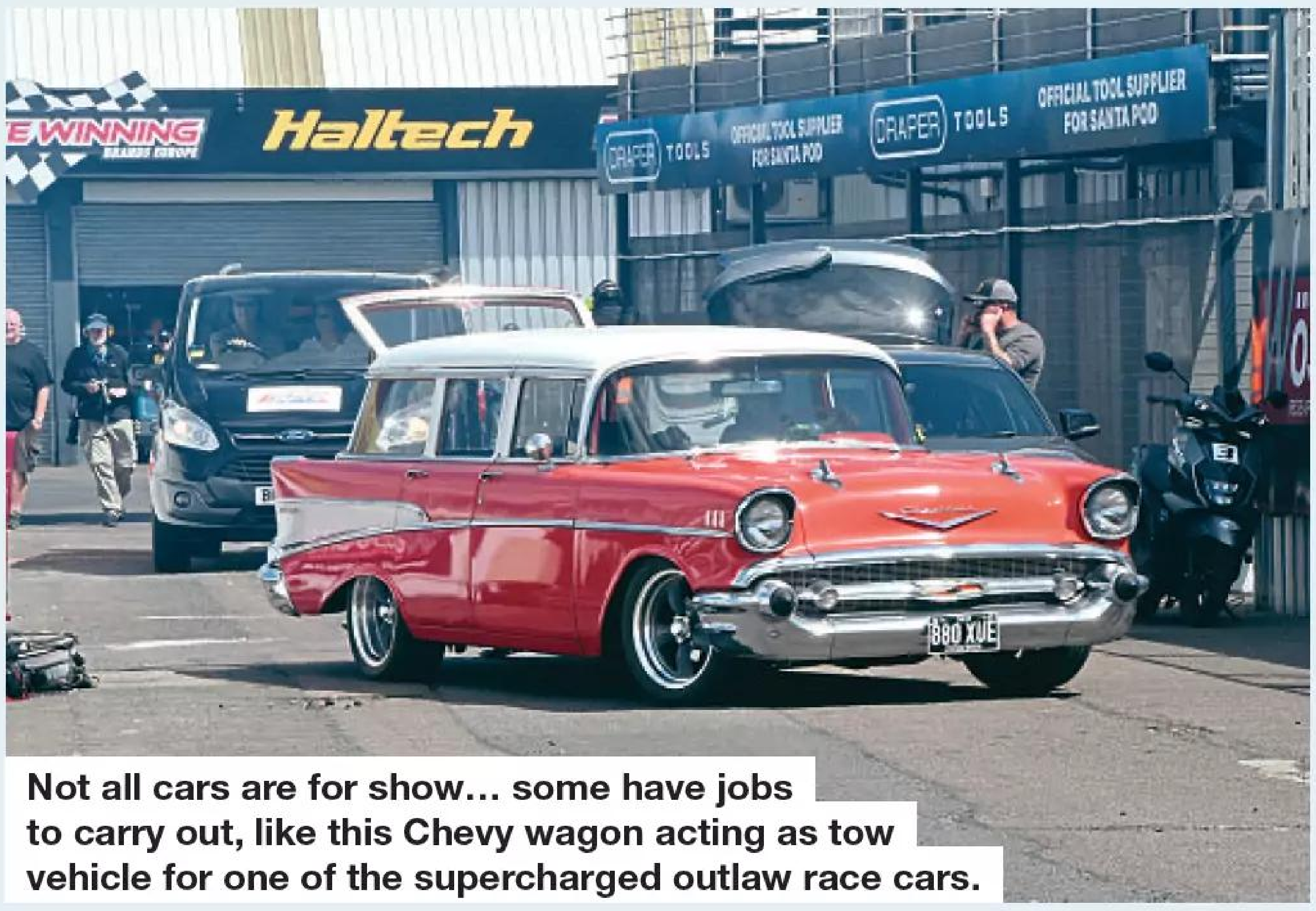
The only thing better than a wheels-up
is a side-by-side wheels-up.

Gary Semper had a good weekend in the Tin Indian Pontiac, running a new personal best of 11.25.



Harvey Turner took the Nostalgia Super Stock class win in his new-out '66 Chevy wagon.

The weather was certainly pleasant enough to have the roof down over the weekend, like this lucky Mustang owner.



Not all cars are for show… some have jobs to carry out, like this Chevy wagon acting as tow vehicle for one of the supercharged outlaw race cars.

Race car builder and tuner John Sleath out for some fun in the Camaro.

KESTREL BEER
Haltech

Good friends Jake Cawthorne and Nick Martin lining up in qualifying.
KESTREL BEER
Santa Pod Rac

Jim Smith qualified number one at the end of qualifying, with a 10.260 run on 10.26 dial in.
KESTREL BEER
Haltech

You don't have to enter a class to have a go. Anyone can take their car down the quarter mile, just like this very nice tri-Chevy.

santapod.com

Haltech
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A shiny paint job doesn't make a car go faster – this Plymouth was running some strong low 11-second passes just fine!
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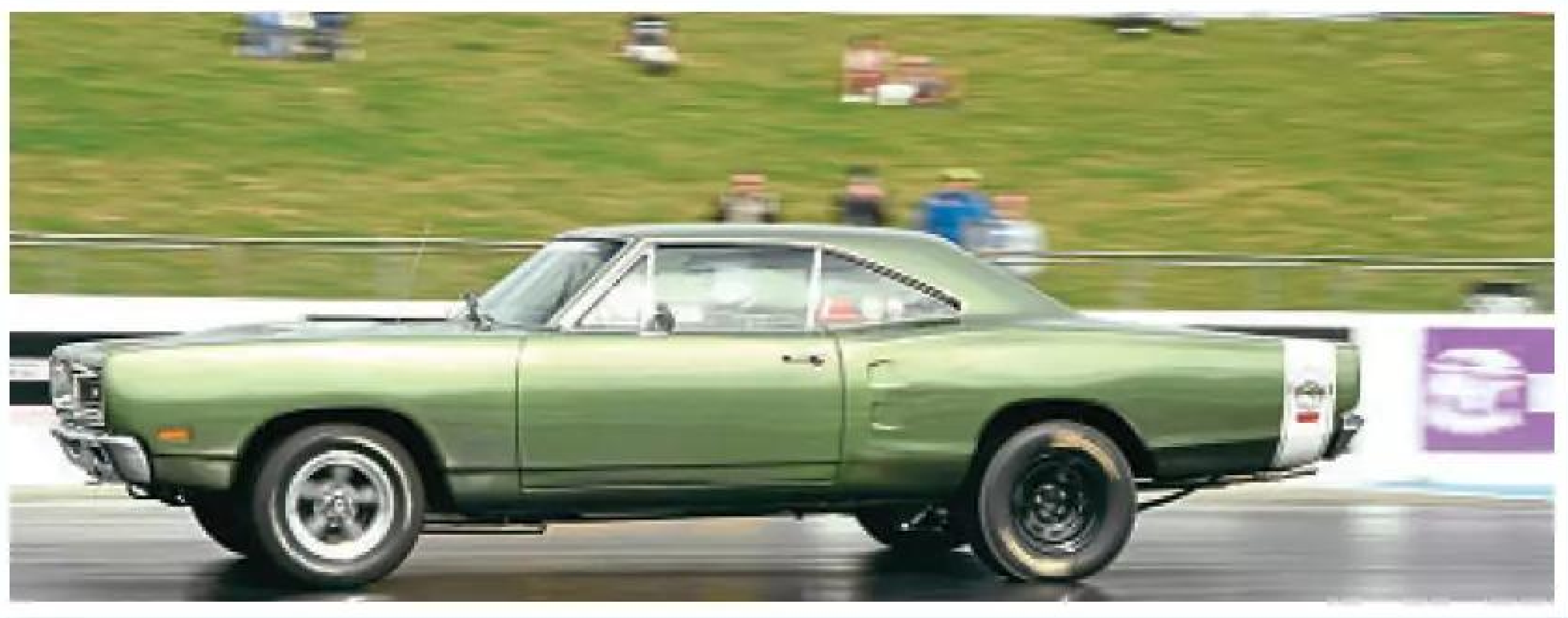

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TECH: ELECTRICAL – TURN SIGNALS AND BRAKE LIGHTS

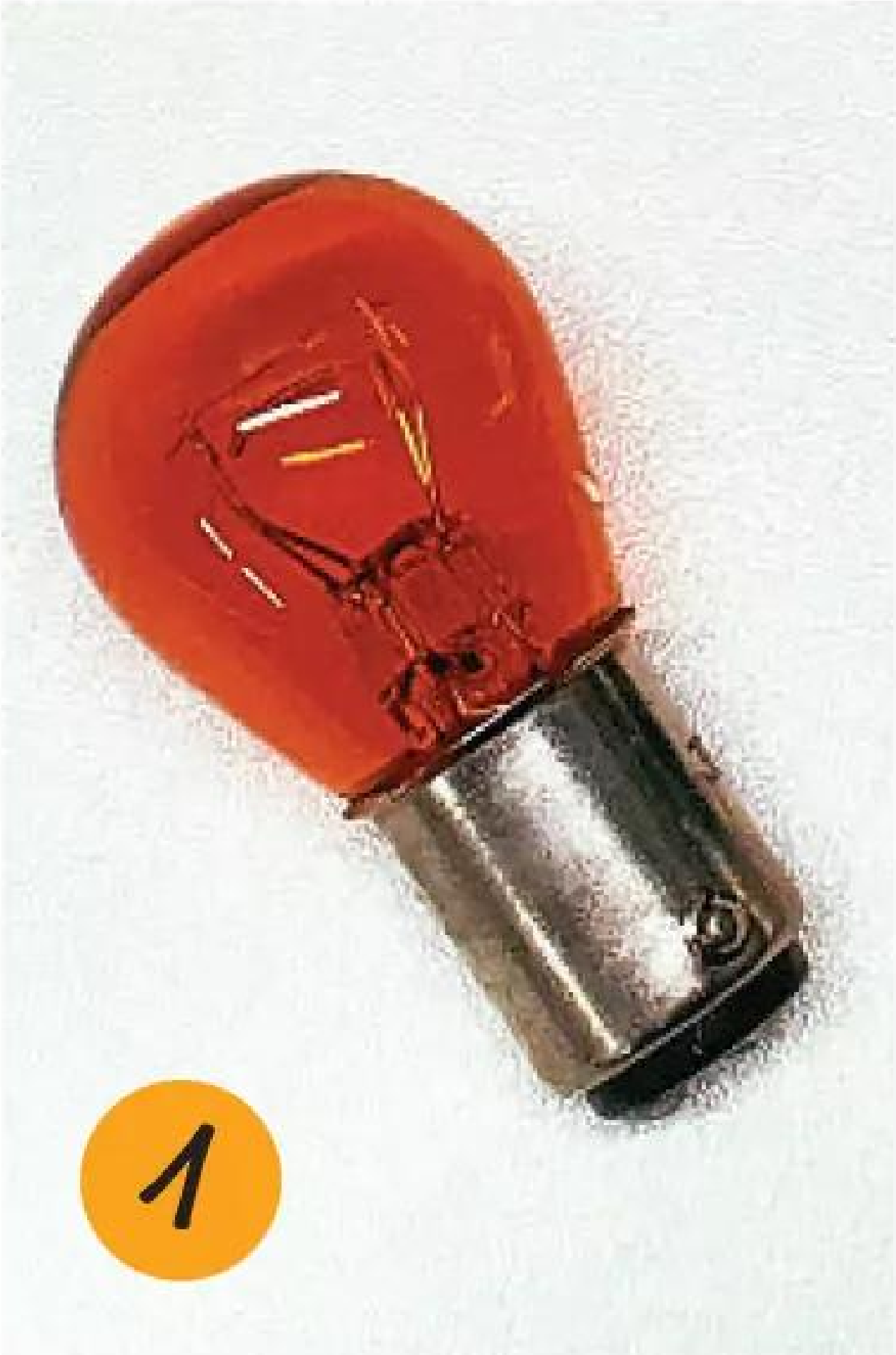
Words and photography: Martin M Mumford

Amber turn signals are a legal requirement for post-1965 American cars and are considered a good safety precaution in the UK and Europe, where red turn signals are unknown. Our resident tech guru, Martin Mumford, has some easy conversion suggestions…

If you have been around early American cars, I'm sure you will have noticed how poor some of their lights are. Using the turn signals in daylight is sometimes unnoticeable if the park and turn signals are standard amber bulbs at the front; when the park lamps are on and you indicate, they do nothing more than glow a little brighter (I use the term loosely).

The MoT restrictions concerning turn signals are the colour and the fact that the brake light is being interrupted. The government's MoT Compliance and Requirements states that: "Vehicles first used on or after September 1, 1965, must have amber indicators ('turn signals') front and rear, whereas vehicles used before that date can have red turn signals at the rear, and white at the front." The discussion on this subject is a regular one at car meets and with your friendly MoT tester.

I have lost count of the American vehicles I've owned; however, some of the ones from the 60s, 70s and 80s have had red turn signals at the rear. Historically, I have found that if you don't give the constabulary an excuse to pull you over, you will generally be okay with that set-up; they appear to have more important things to do than hassle us! That said, more recently I am getting reports that some MoT stations are tightening up on the turn-signal saga. With this in mind, and from a safety point of view, not only for yourself, but for the avoidance of having your pride and joy being shunted by someone that just didn't realise you were making a turn, I would like to show you the cost-effective and relatively easy options of upgrading these lights.



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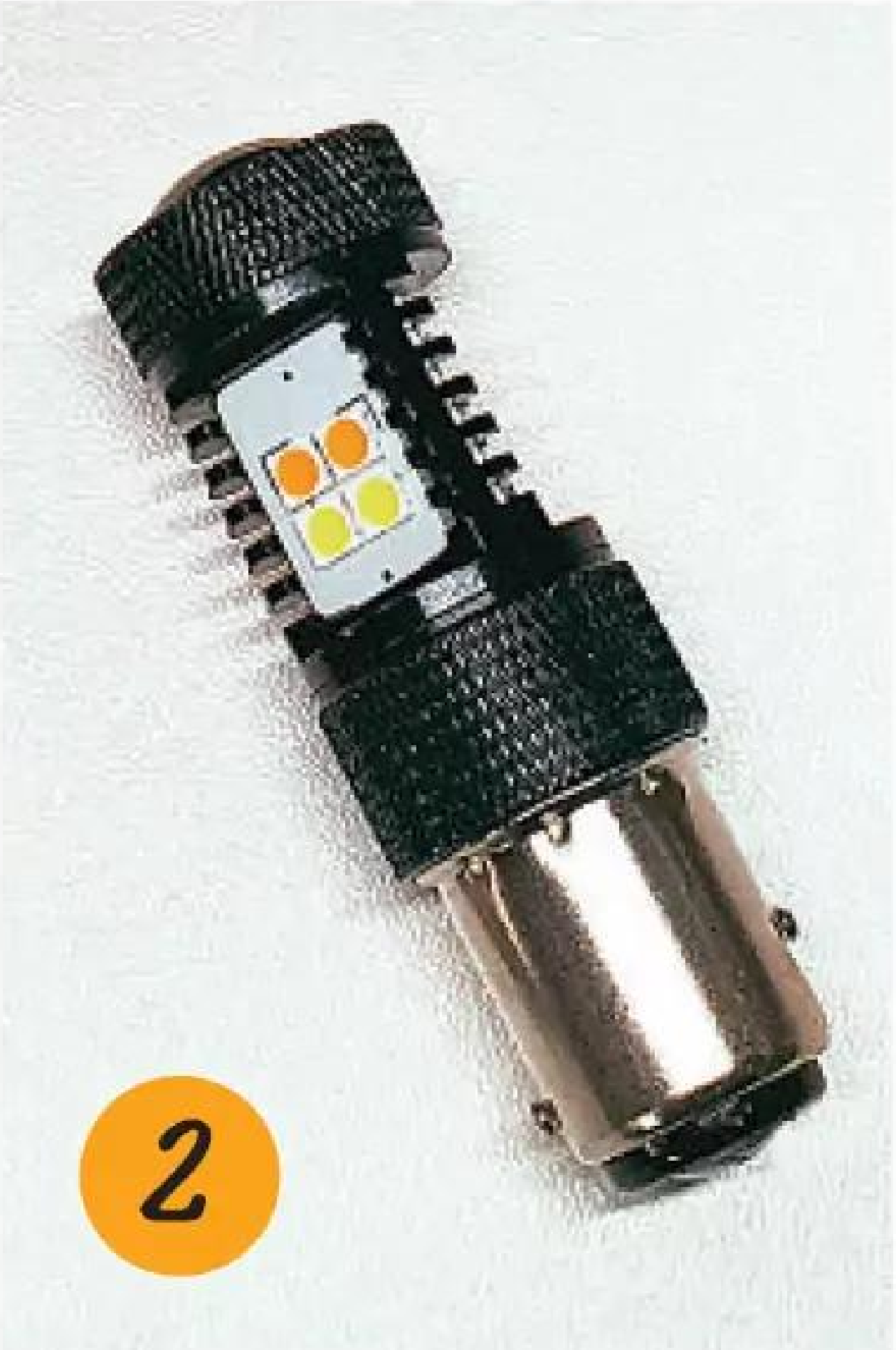

2

1. An orange bulb is the easiest option.

2. LED switch-type bulbs.

The first and easy option is to change the front park and turn bulb. If these are a single bulb with dual filament (**fig. 1**), then this is a worthwhile upgrade; I purchased LED switch-type bulbs (**fig. 2**). These, as stated, switch between a white light for the side/park light, to amber when flashing. Simply fit these (no rewiring needed) and once it receives the turn signal impute, the white light turns off and the amber flashes, and both are good and bright! The following is a comparison with a clear lens (**fig. 3**), then with factory-standard turn-signal bulb (**fig. 4**) to the upgraded LED turn-signal bulb (**fig. 5**). You will find that

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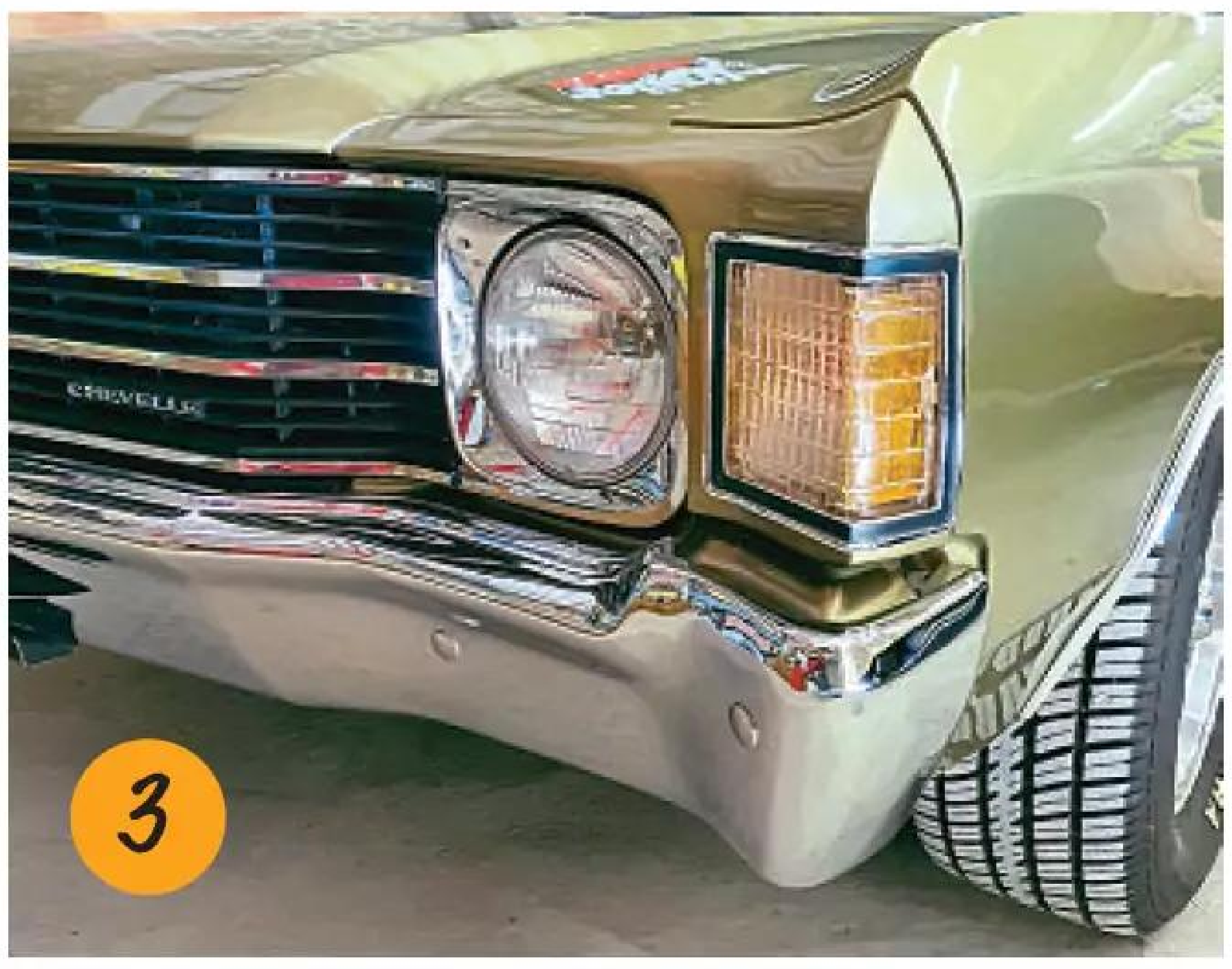
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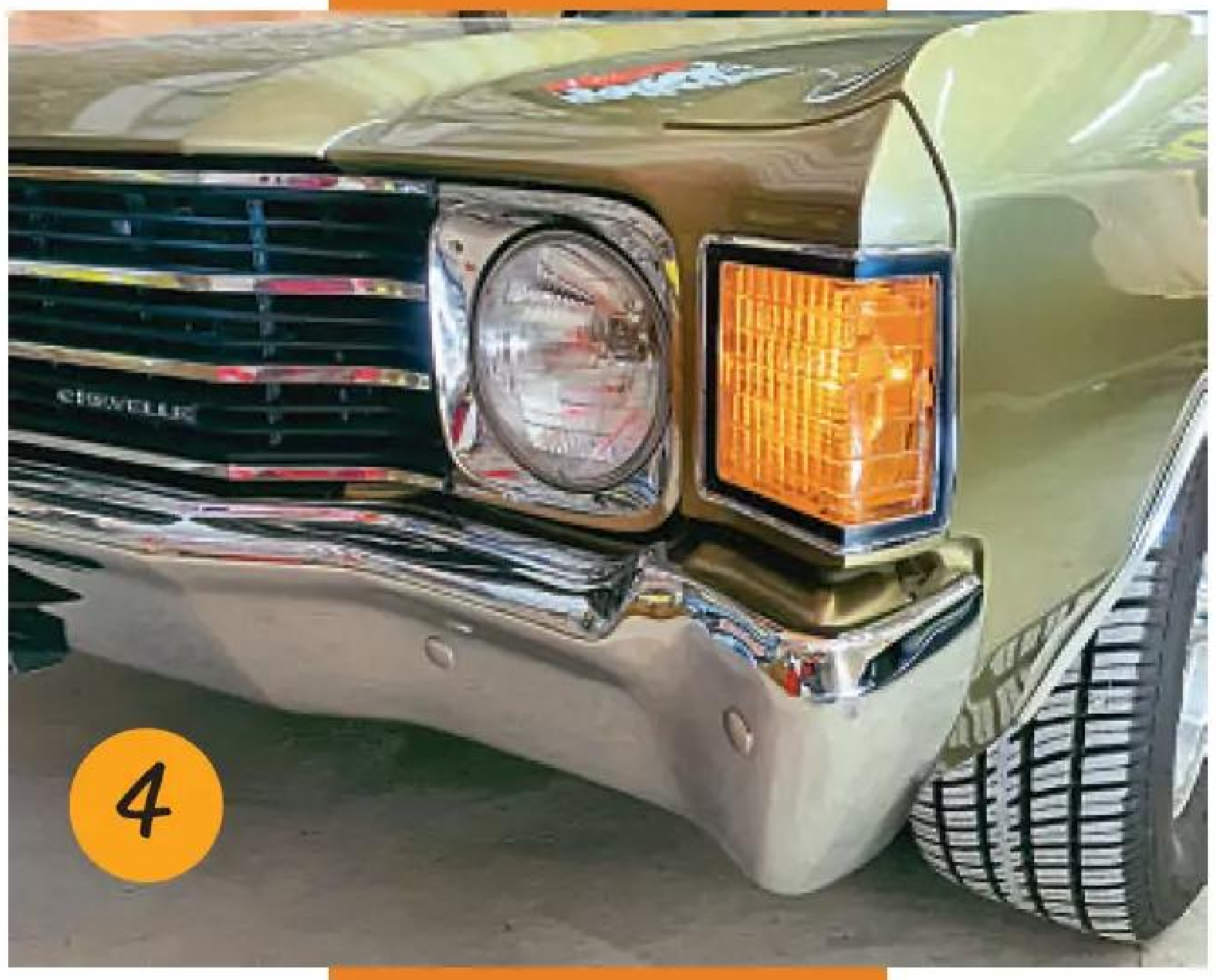
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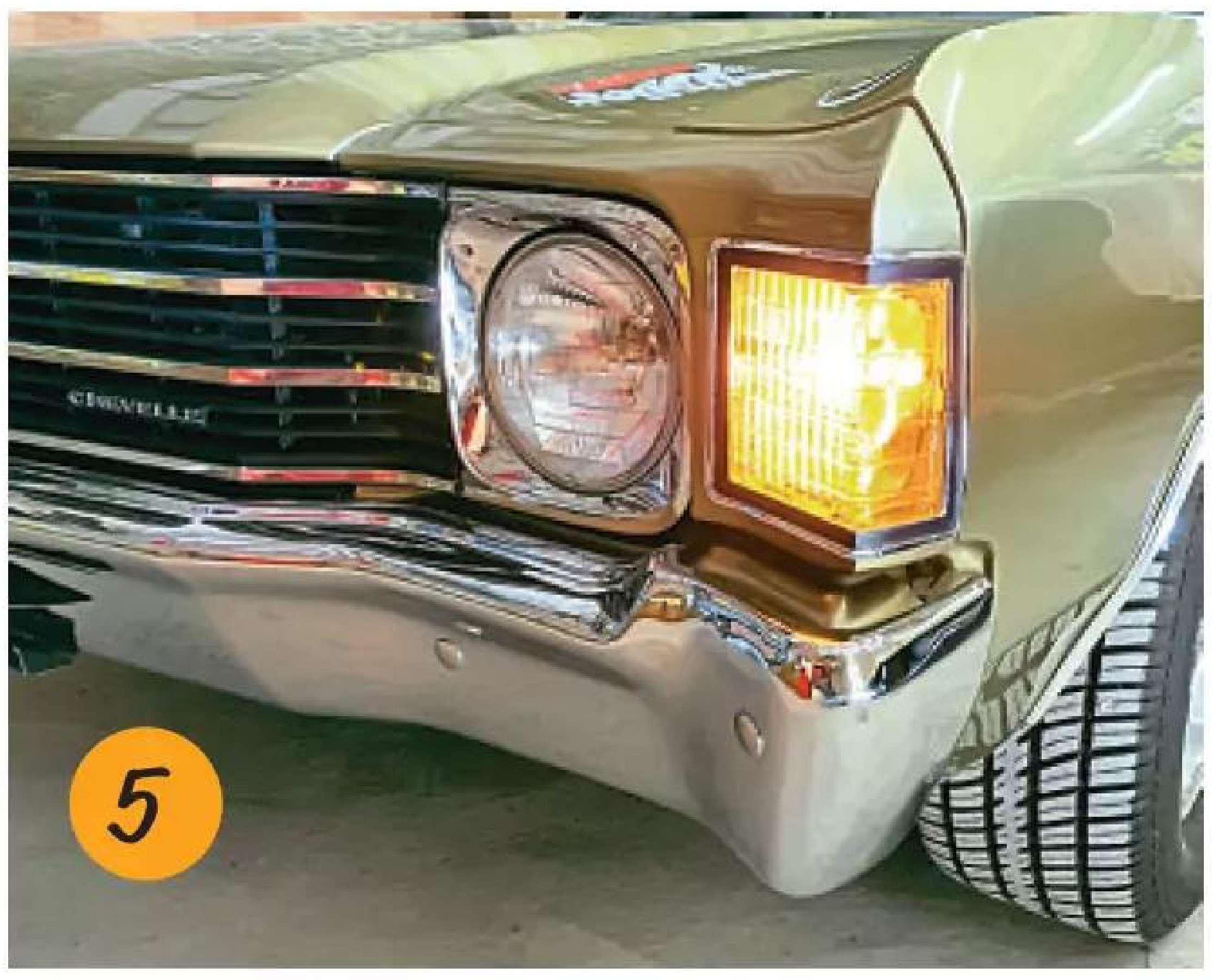
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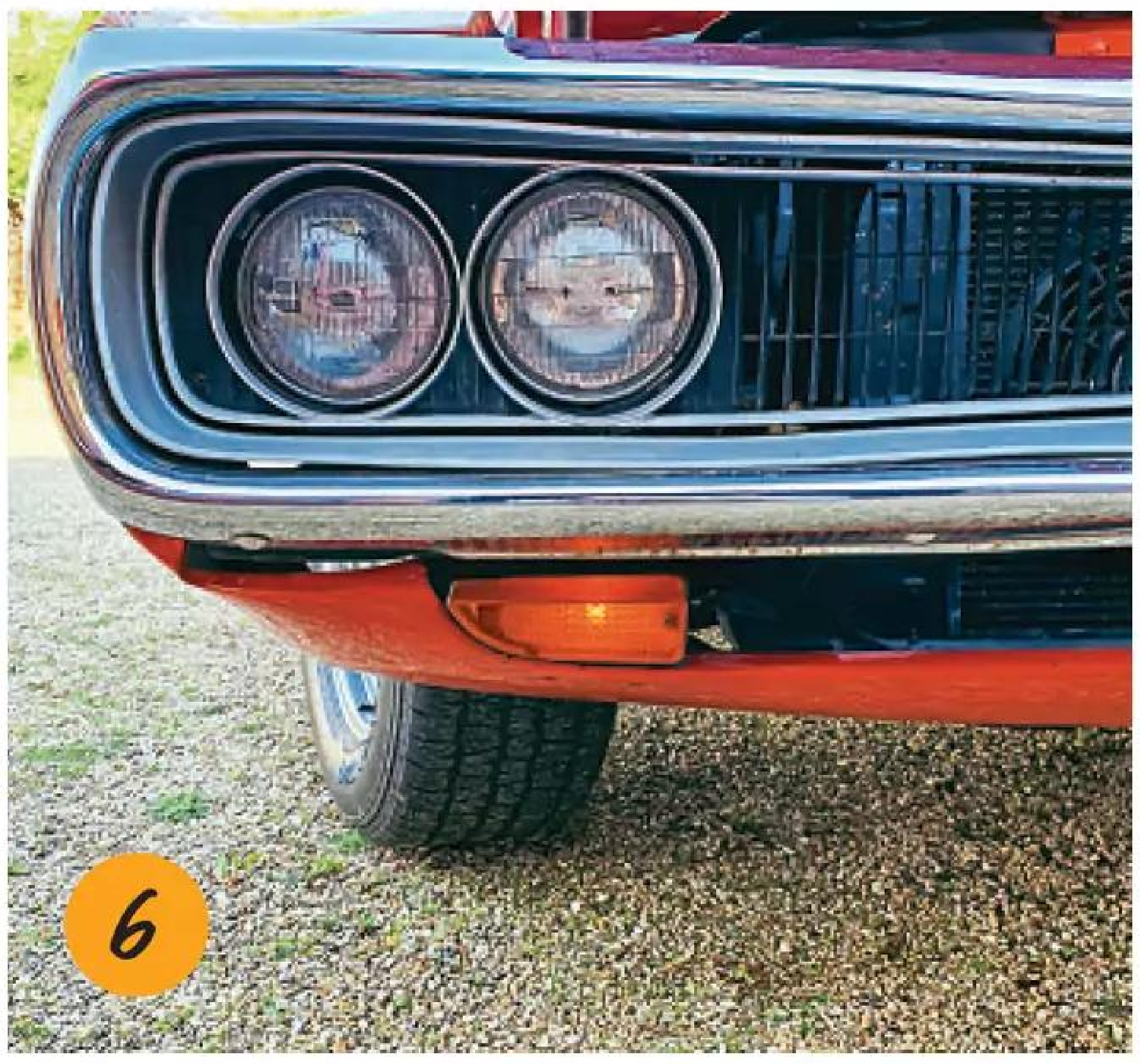
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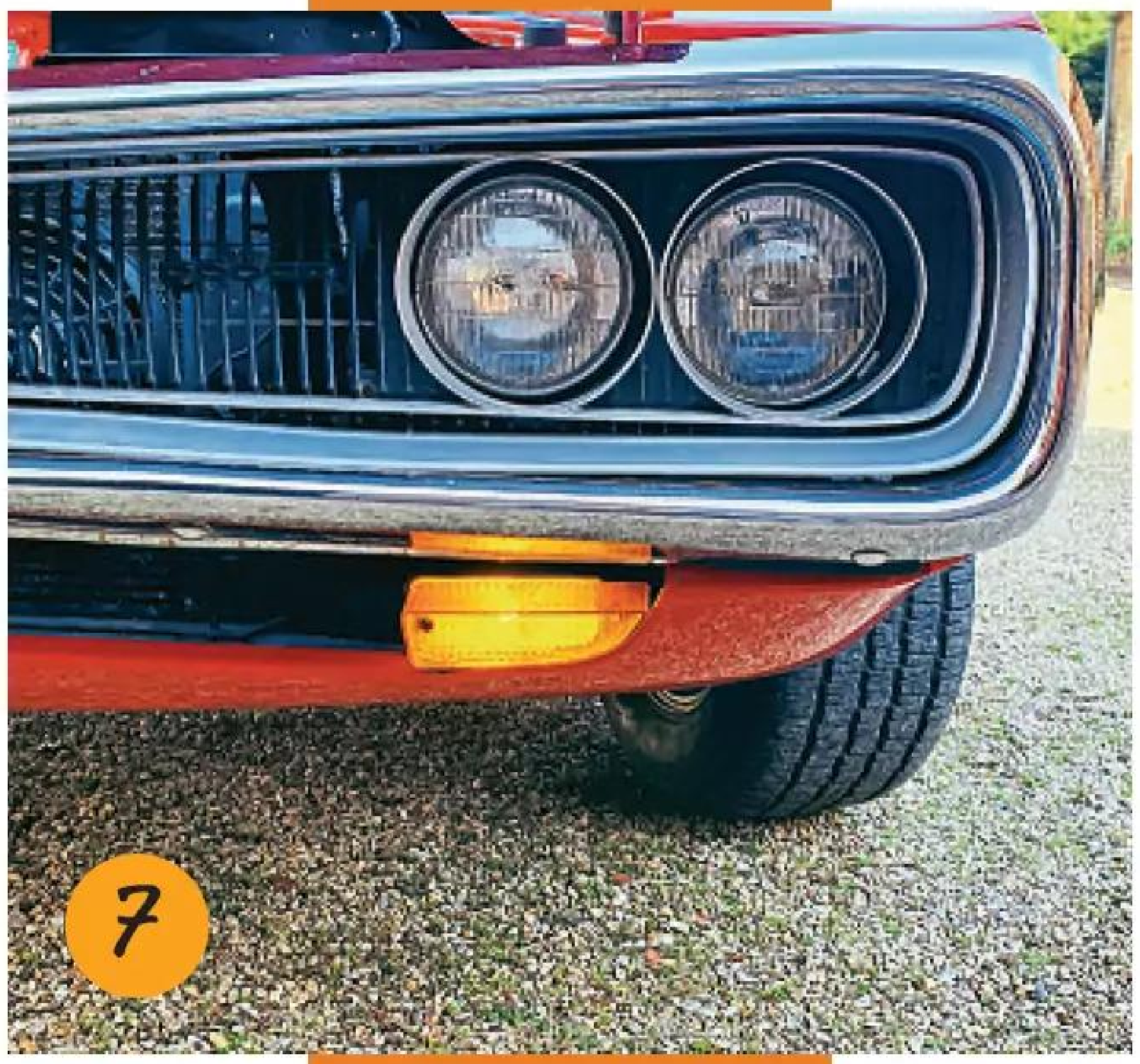
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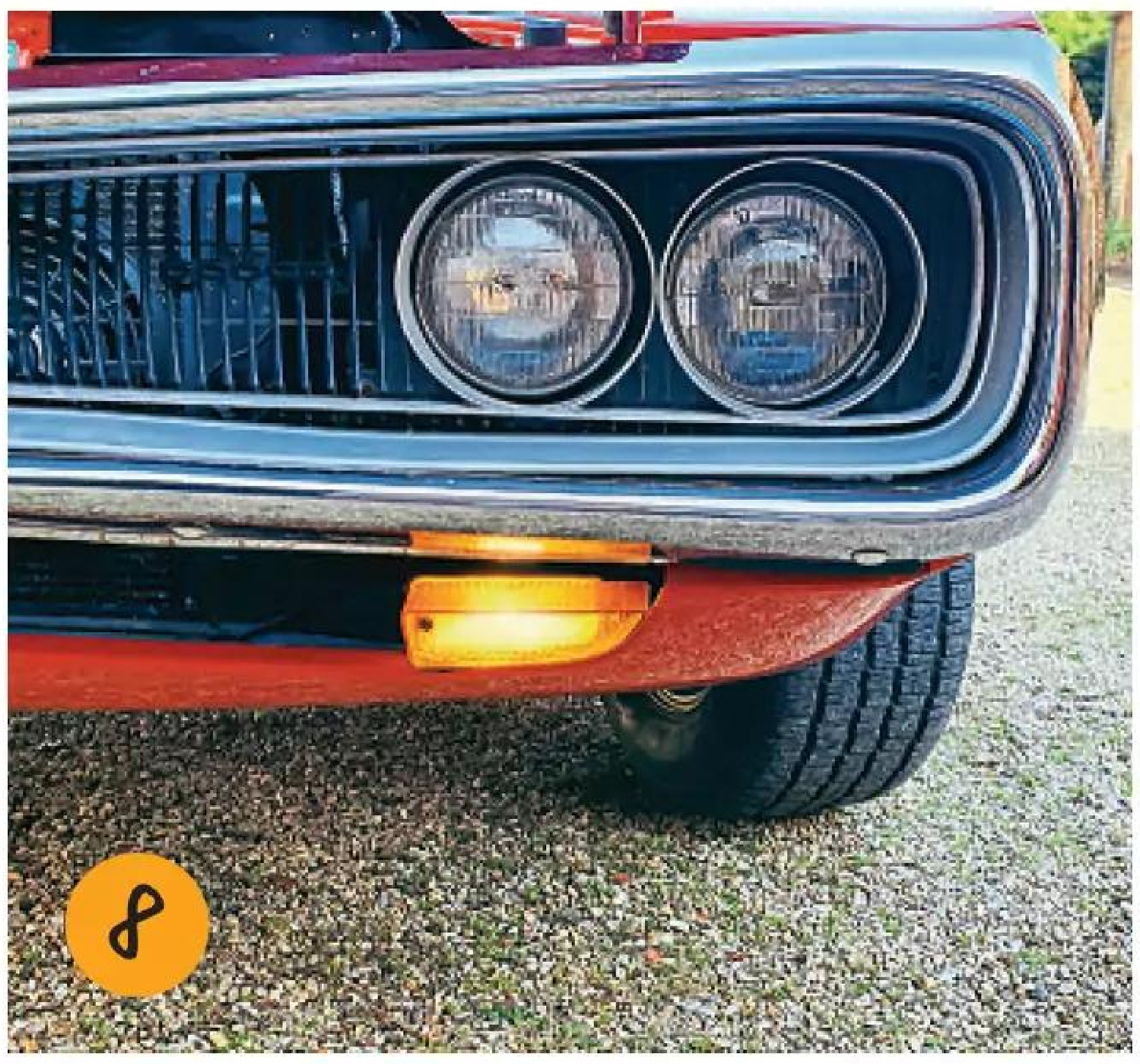
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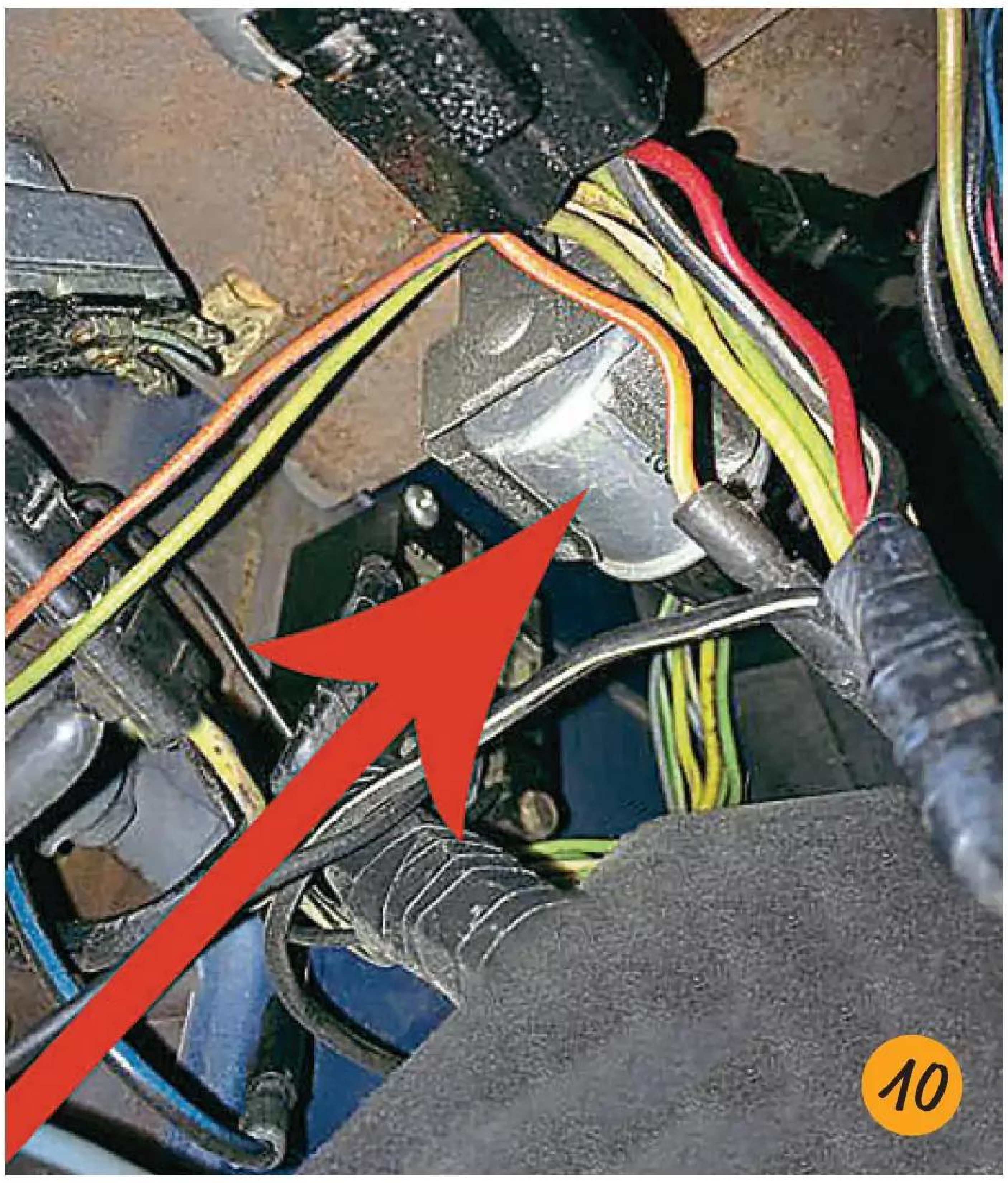
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3. Clear lens with no light showing.

4. Clear lens with factory-standard turn-signal bulb.

5. Clear lens with upgraded LED turn-signal bulb.

6. Amber lens with factory-standard turn-signal bulb.

7. Amber lens with upgraded LED turn-signal bulb.

8. Amber lens using the side (white) light bulb.

9. Replacement flasher unit.

10. Flasher usually is located under the dash.

11. Years of grime and crud darken this lens.

12. Ta dah! Like new after a wash.

these LED bulbs will work equally well with amber lenses as shown here with standard and LED for comparison (**fig. 6, fig. 7**) and using the side (white) light (**fig. 8**).

Do be careful when ordering these LED bulbs, as there are many listed on internet sites that look correct but are not. Most of the switch-type bulbs (from white to amber) appear to be CAN bus-compliant, which is fine as they have a resistance; this may be required as it will help the system on an early car continue to flash at the correct rate, because standard LEDs have little resistance.

If you have a problem with the rate of flash, it may be possible to change the flasher unit as there are various ones available (**fig. 9**). The flasher unit is usually found under the dash. If you are unsure of where it is, simply turn the indicators on and listen to where the clicking comes from (**fig. 10**). So, with the front lamps sorted (well, almost!) you'll be surprised how dirty the lenses can get on the inside, as well as out (**fig. 11**), so give 'em a wash and they will look much sharper (**fig. 12**).

11

12

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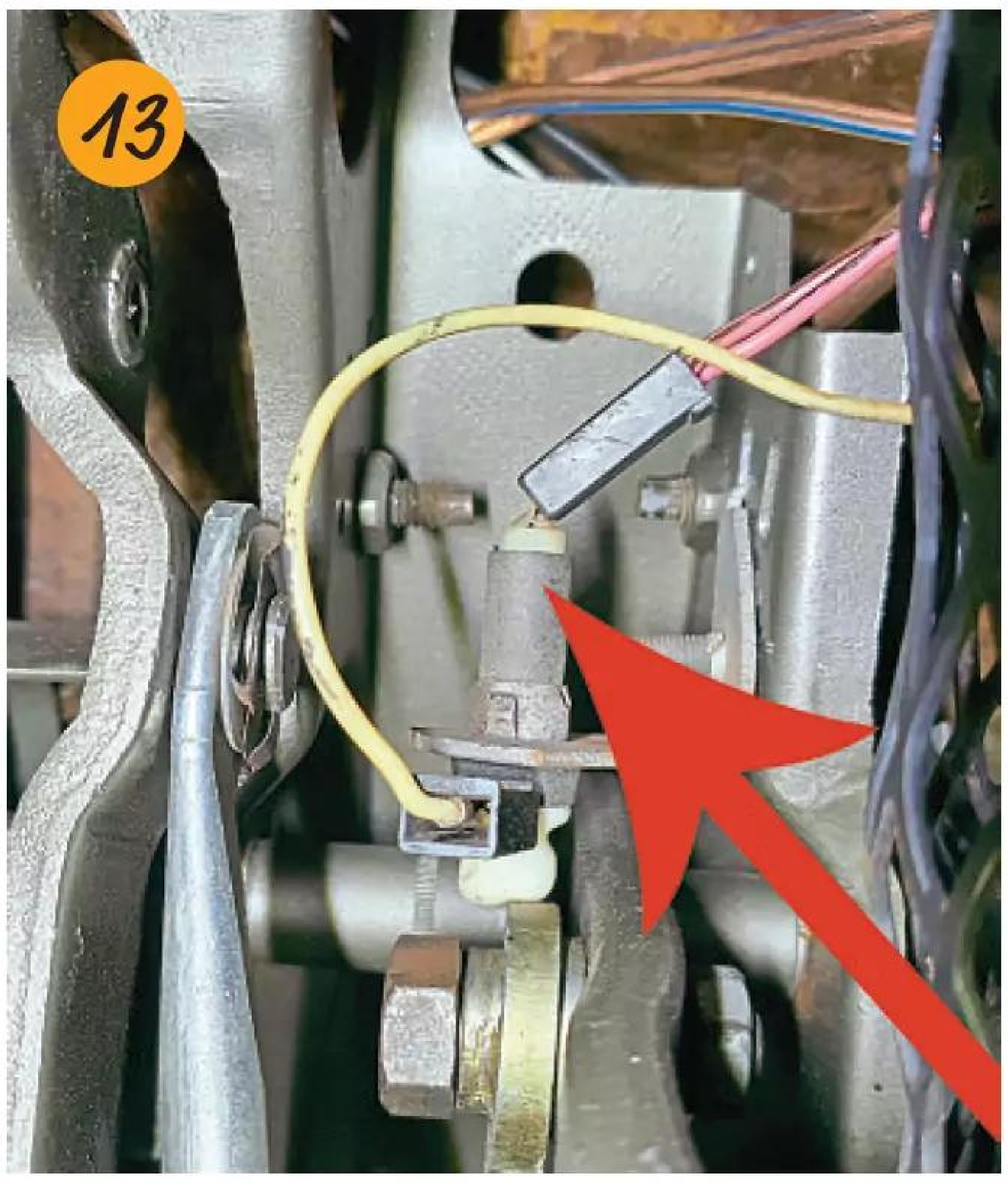
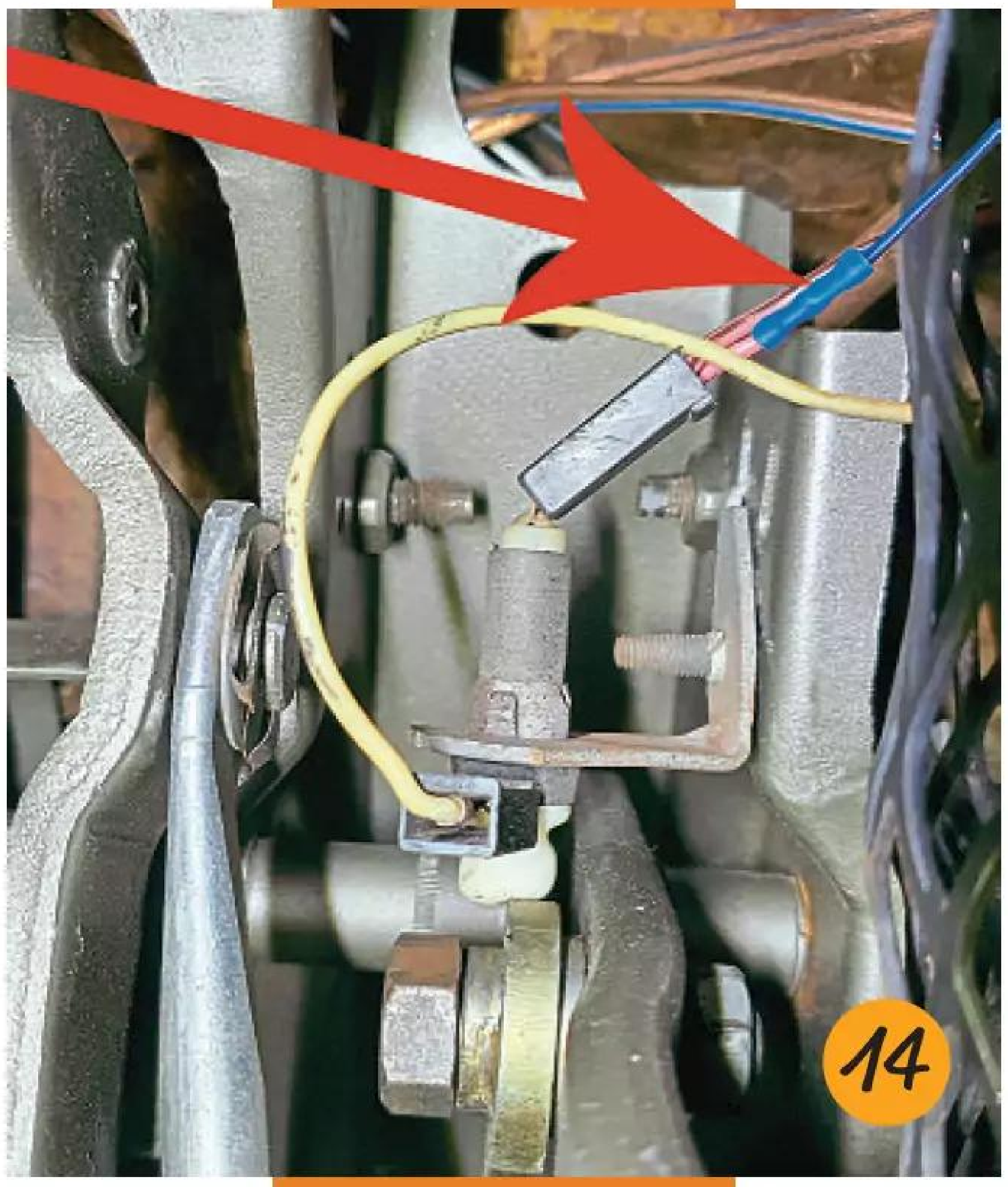
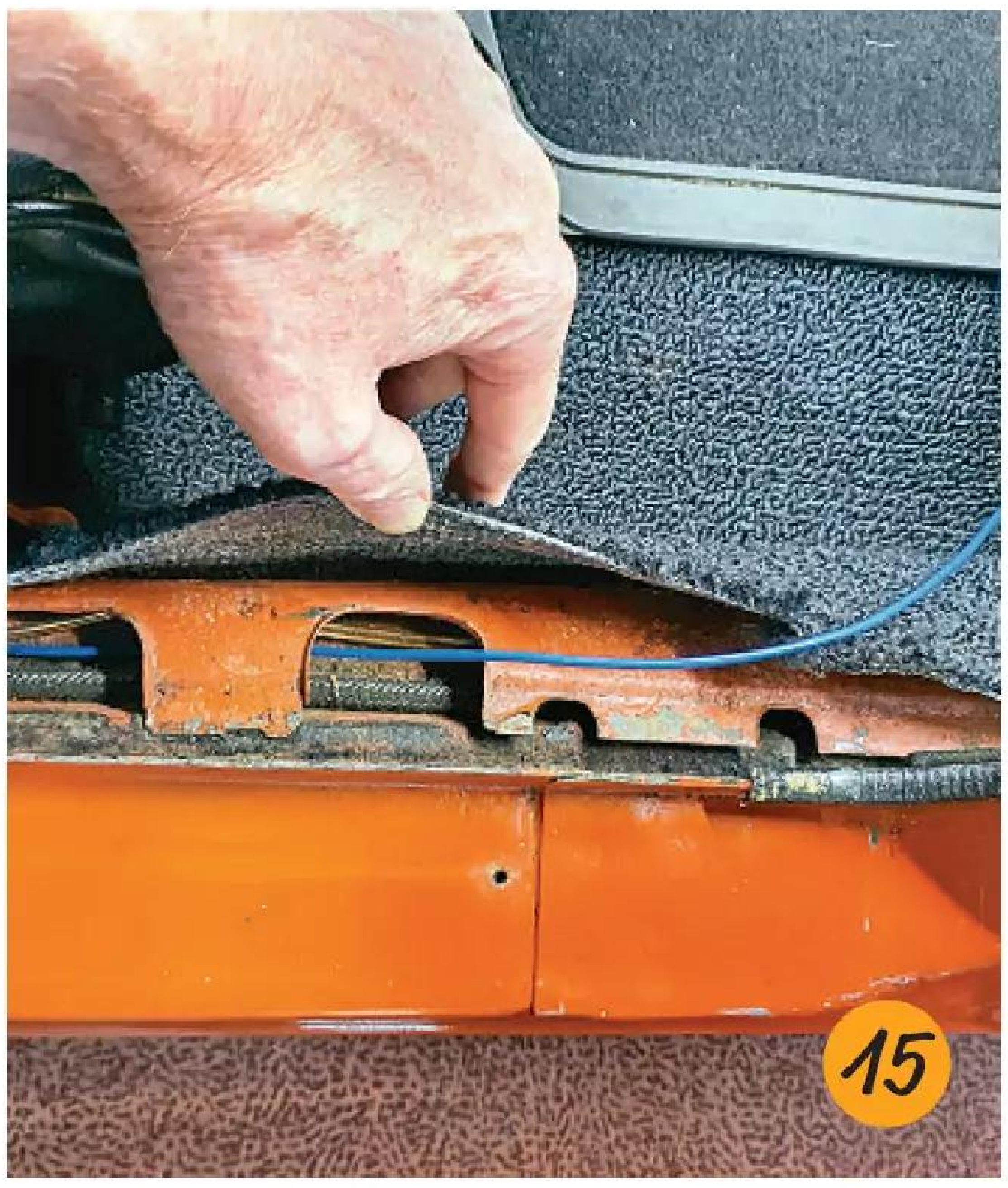






13. Brake-light switch.

14. New wire (blue) which runs to the tail-lights.

15. New wire can be run under carpet and via sill plates.

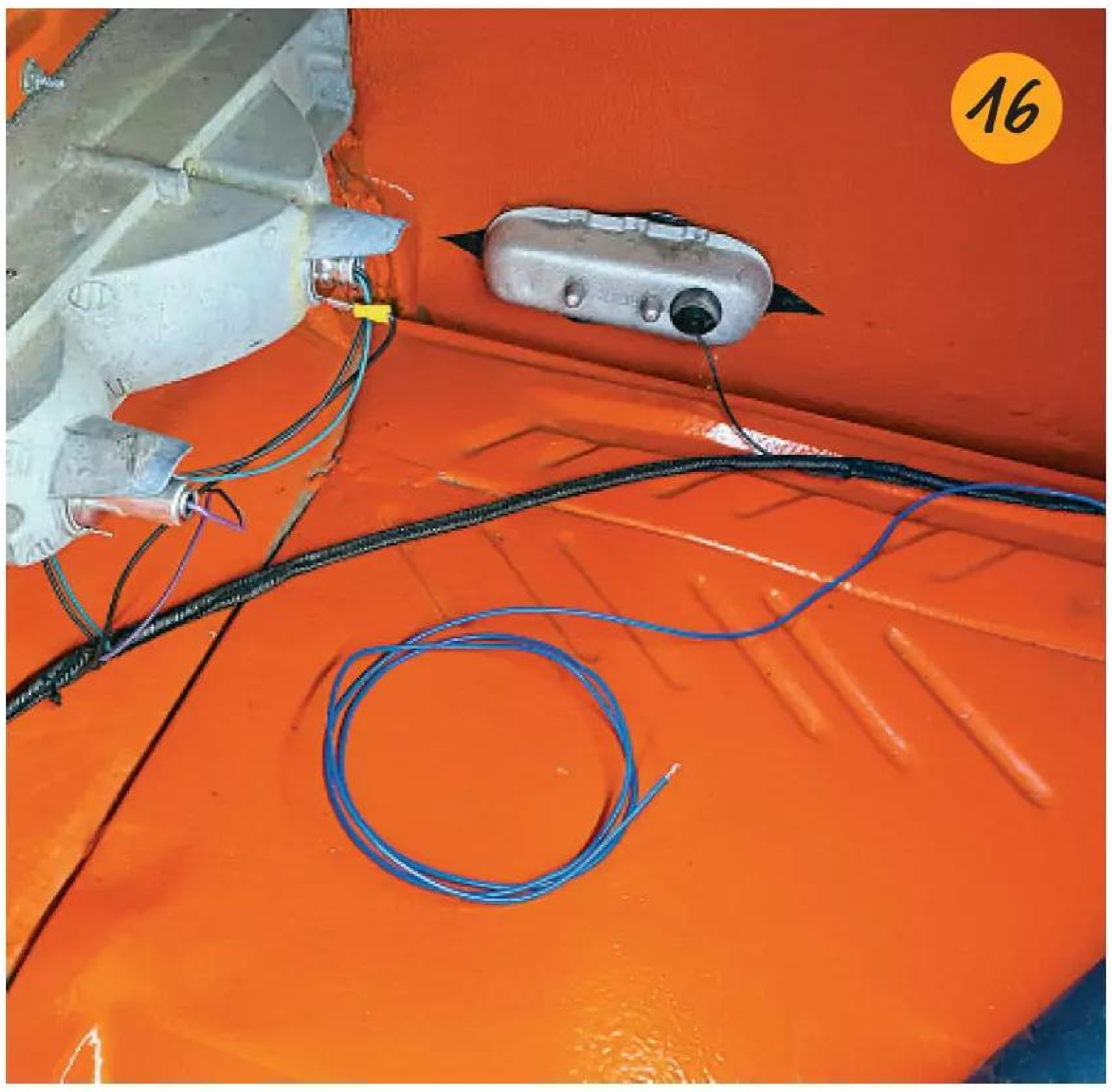
16. New blue wire in trunk ready for connection to tail-lights.

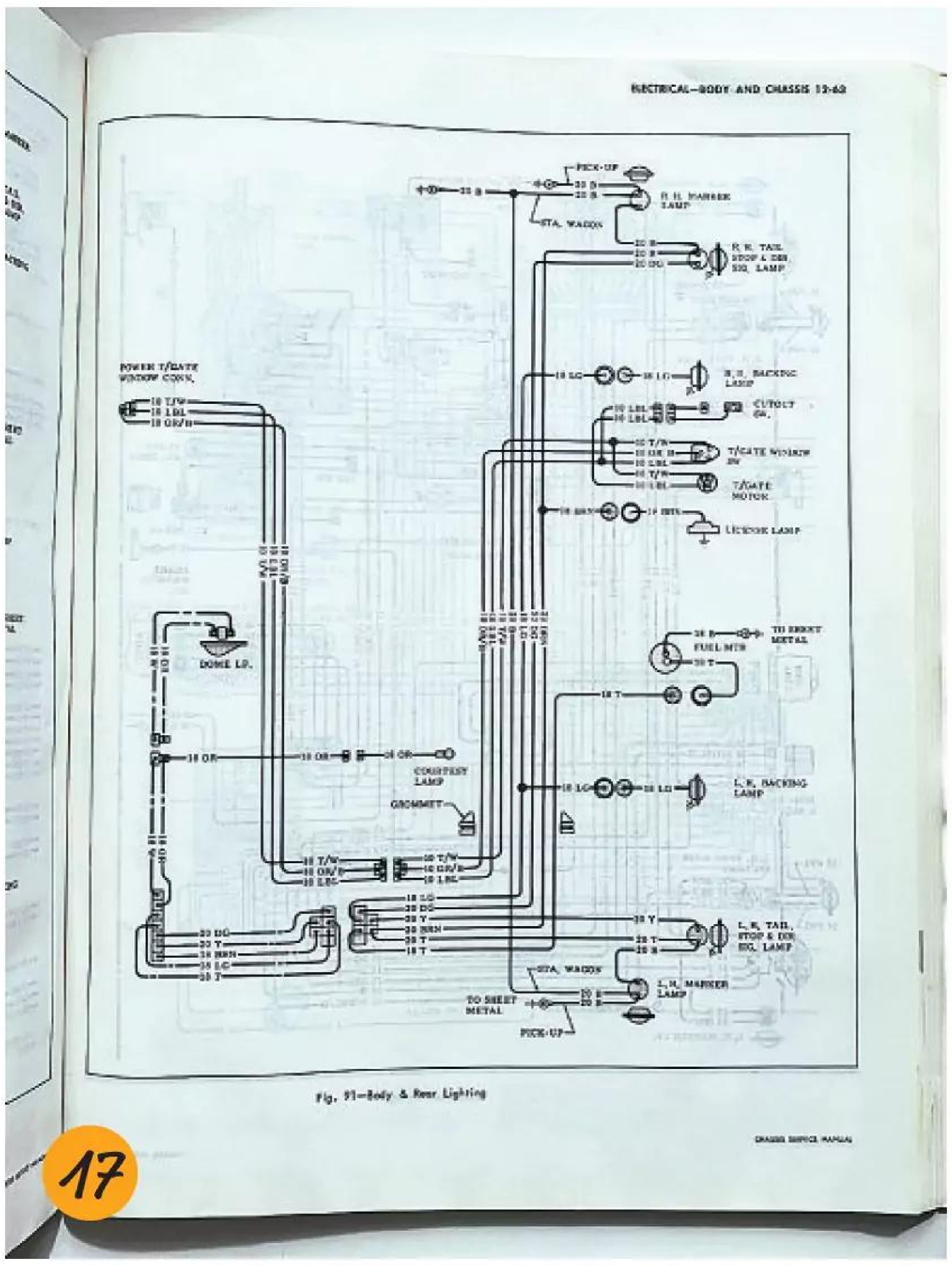
17. Manufacturer's wiring diagram can be invaluable.

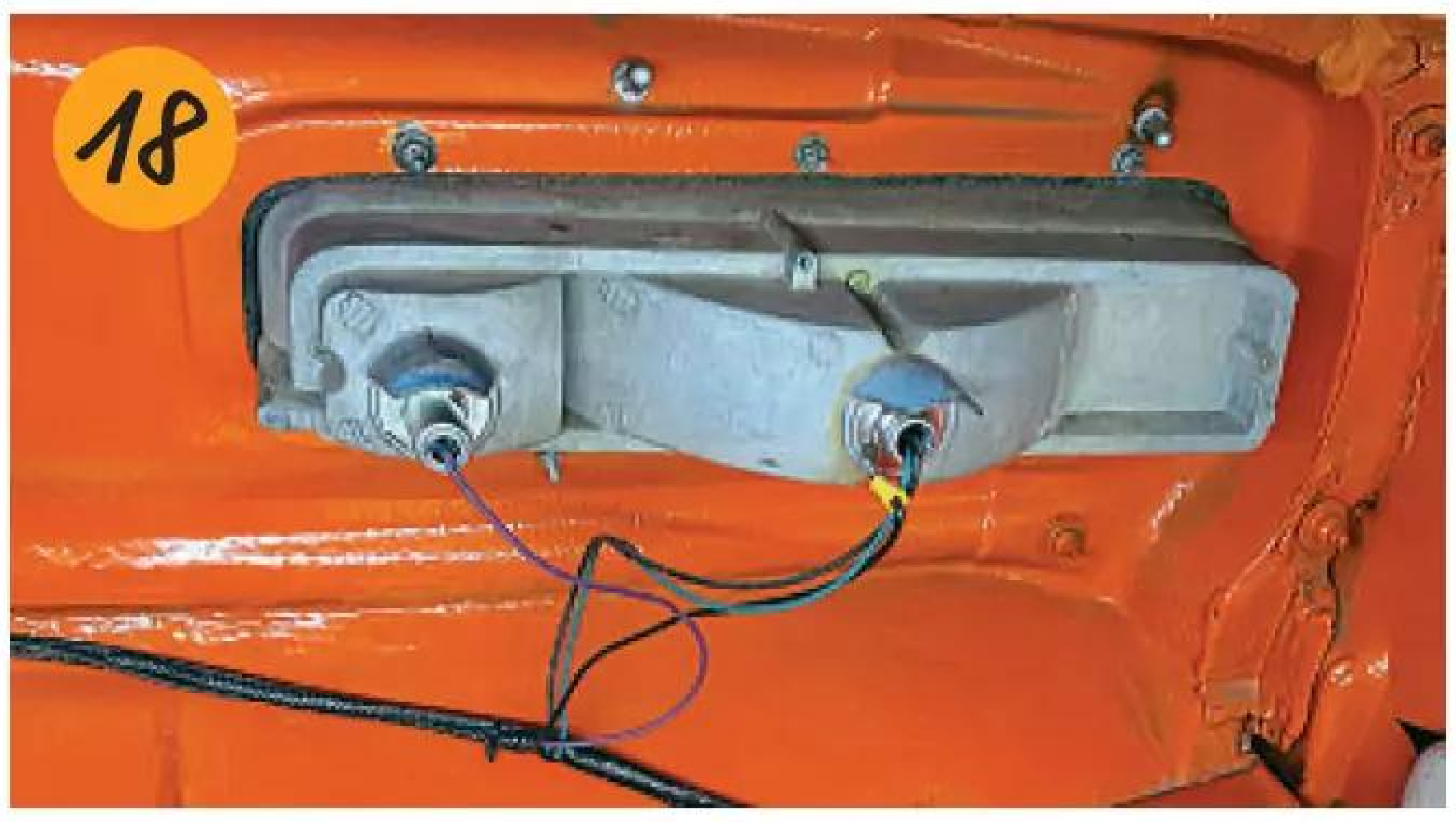
We now move to the rear end. Here, I am changing the red turn signals to amber, and this will get a little more involved. In the past, I have found the best way is to convert the back-up (or reversing) lights, if you have them and they are in a sensible location. This conversion is reasonably straightforward, but I have had people getting confused and making the rewire far too complicated; I personally prefer the easy option. For this exercise, I've used my Dodge Super Bee, as various areas such as the wiring loom, bulb holders and connections are reasonably well-exposed, making it easy for illustrative purposes.

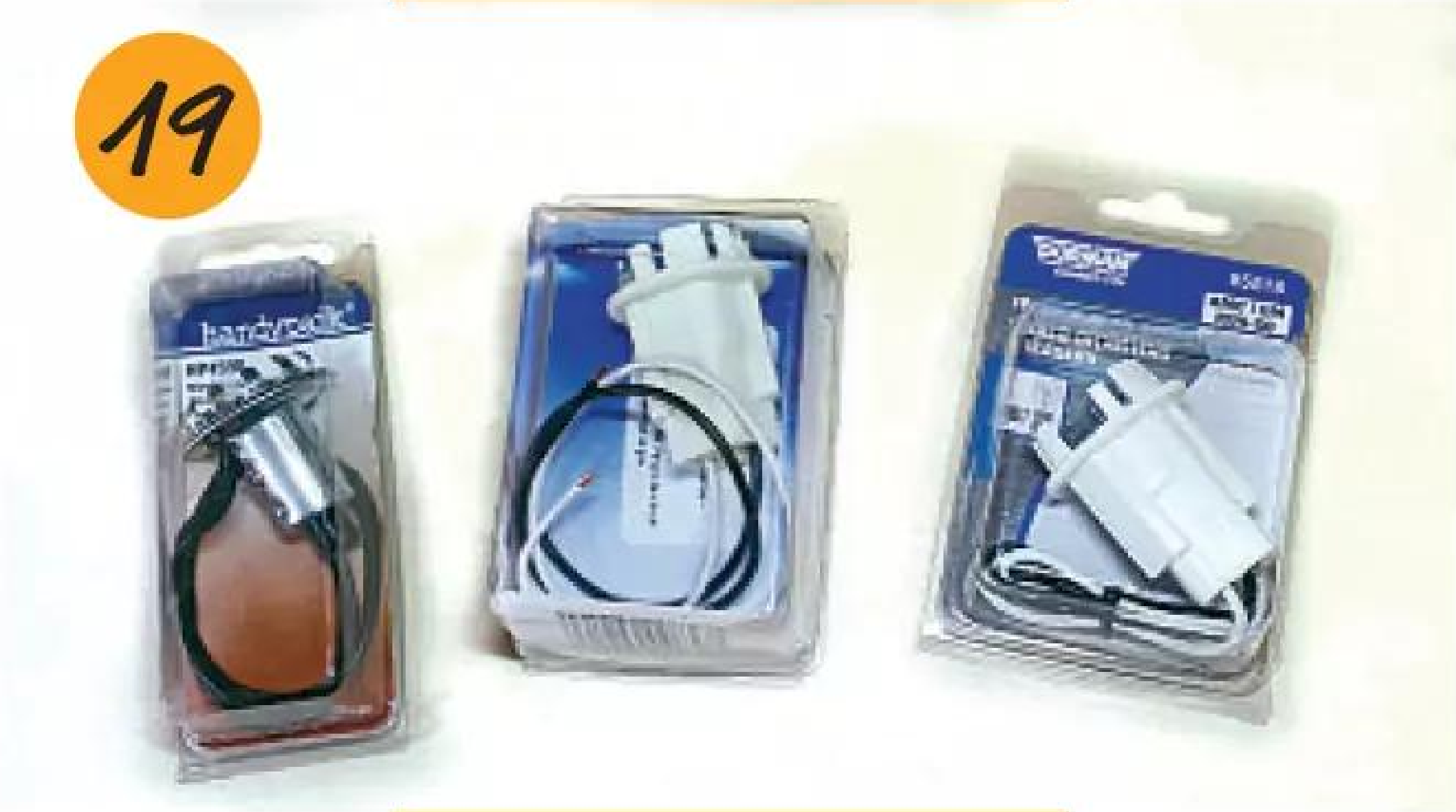
I first start at the brake-light switch on this car. As are many others I have come across, it's a straightforward two-wire connection (**fig. 13**). One is a live feed in, usually a permanent 'hot', but if not, then turn the ignition to on and check it with a meter. The other option is to have access to a wiring diagram; if you don't have a full-service manual, some are posted online. When you have determined which wire is the live feed, ensure the ignition is off and disconnect the battery to avoid any unnecessary fireworks. Now, the other wire which is not live will be the feed to the brake lights. Cut this, as it's no longer needed, insulate the end and tuck it away. This is not required as it is interrupted by the turn-signal system. Just a note here; some vehicles with cruise control will have a third, or possibly fourth wire. The best way to identify the brake-light feed is to do a continuity test on the wires which are not live. This is once again best done with the battery disconnected. A new wire will need to connect to the brake-light switch in place of what has just been cut (**fig. 14**); this blue wire will now be fed through to the rear light assemblies. I find the easiest way is under the carpet via the sill plate (**fig. 15**). Then feed it under the rear seat and into the trunk. You may need to remove the seat to achieve this; the wire can then continue to the rear and will be cable tied to the loom (**fig. 16**).

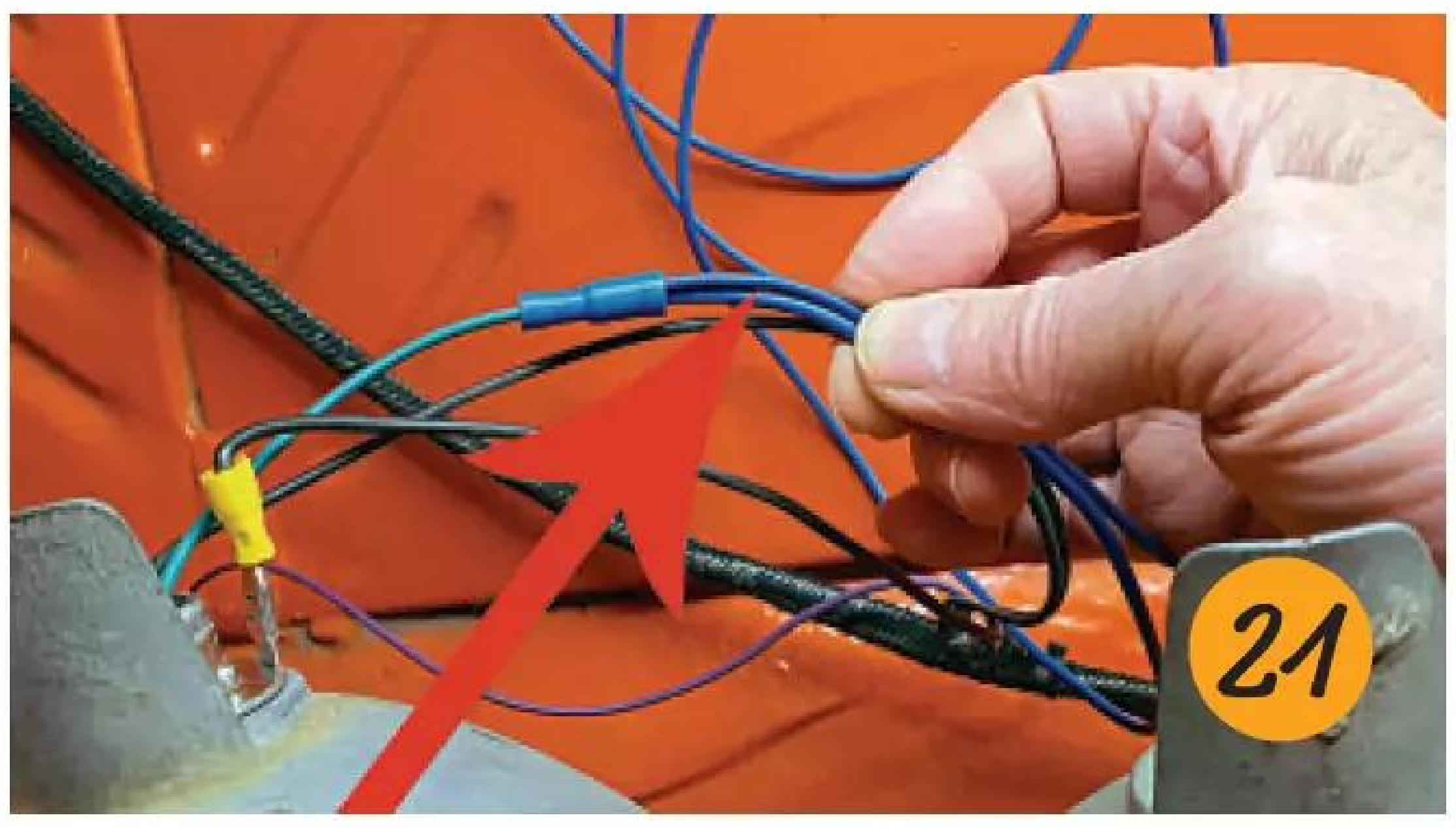
When you have fed it through, it would be helpful, but not essential, to have access to a wiring diagram (**fig. 17**). If, as in this case, the lamp holders are easily accessed, the conversion is made that much simpler (**fig. 18**). Here, it's a case of identifying which wire to cut! There are two options; convert the reverse lights to turn signal with amber bulbs and fit a separate reverse lamp (possibly a discreet under-bumper mounted one) or use the same switch-type bulbs as I described for the front lights and retain the reverse lights. I've gone for the latter option here, so the appearance of the car

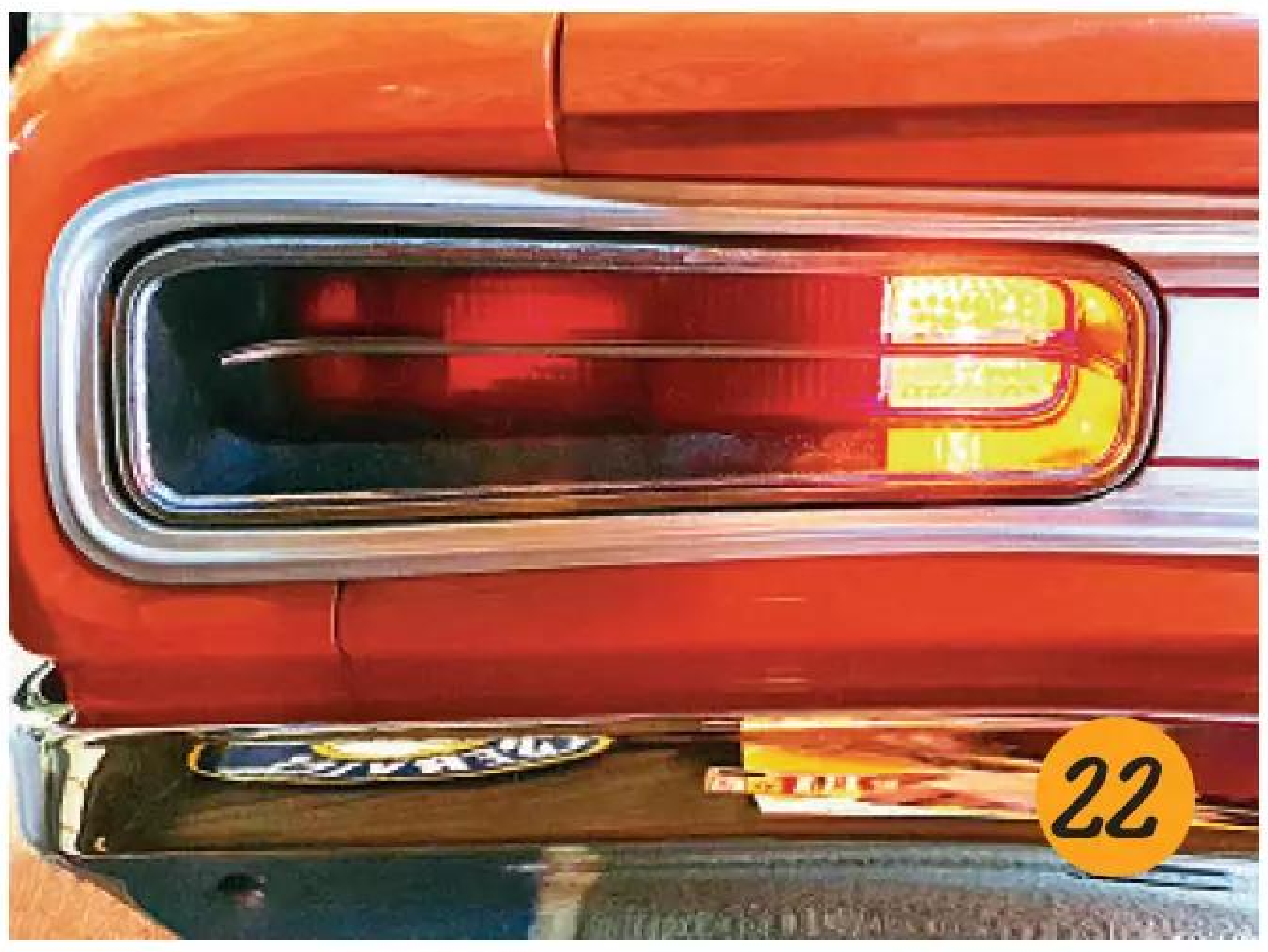


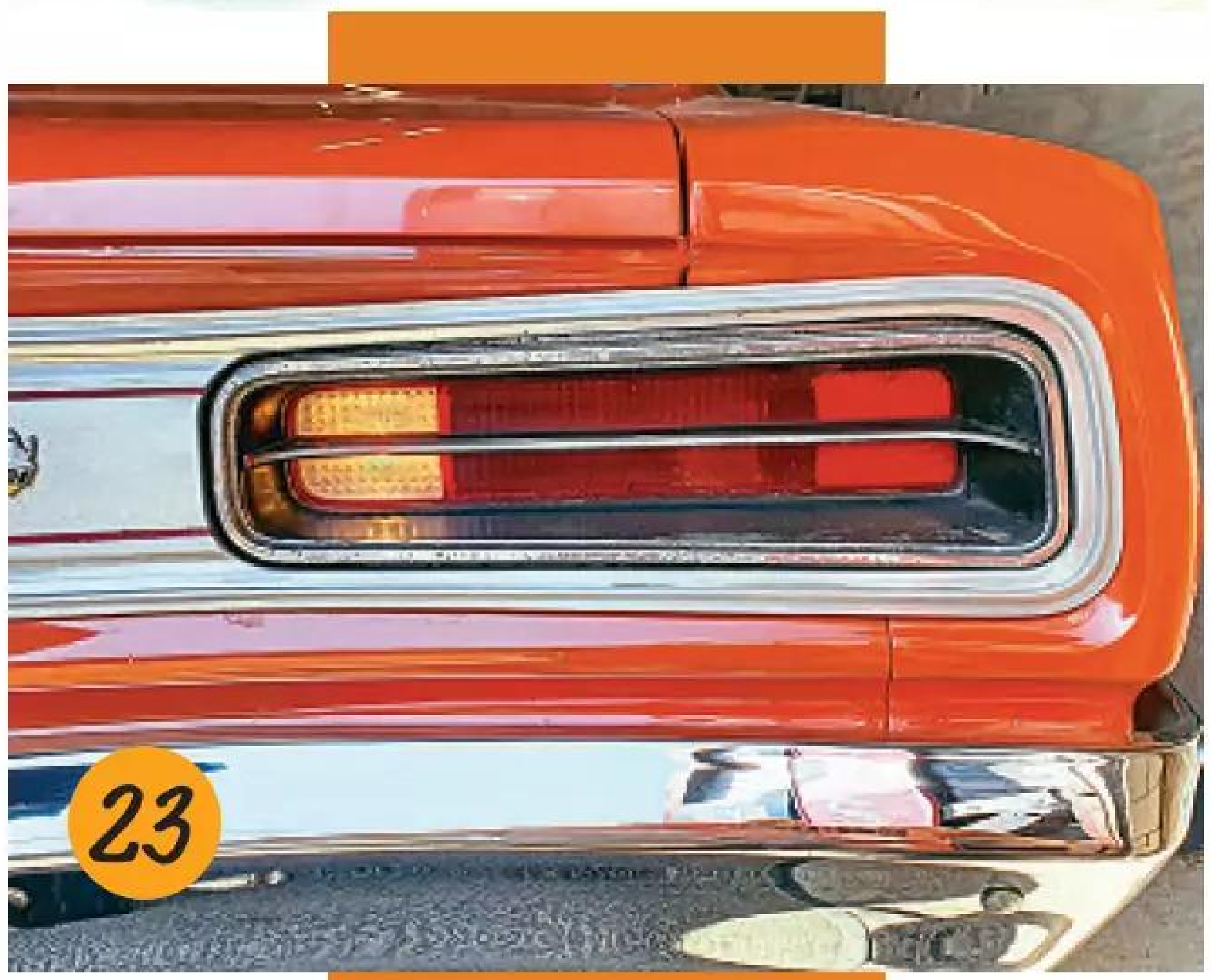

ELECTRICAL—BODY AND CHASSIS 12-62
Fig. 91—Body & Rear Lighting
17

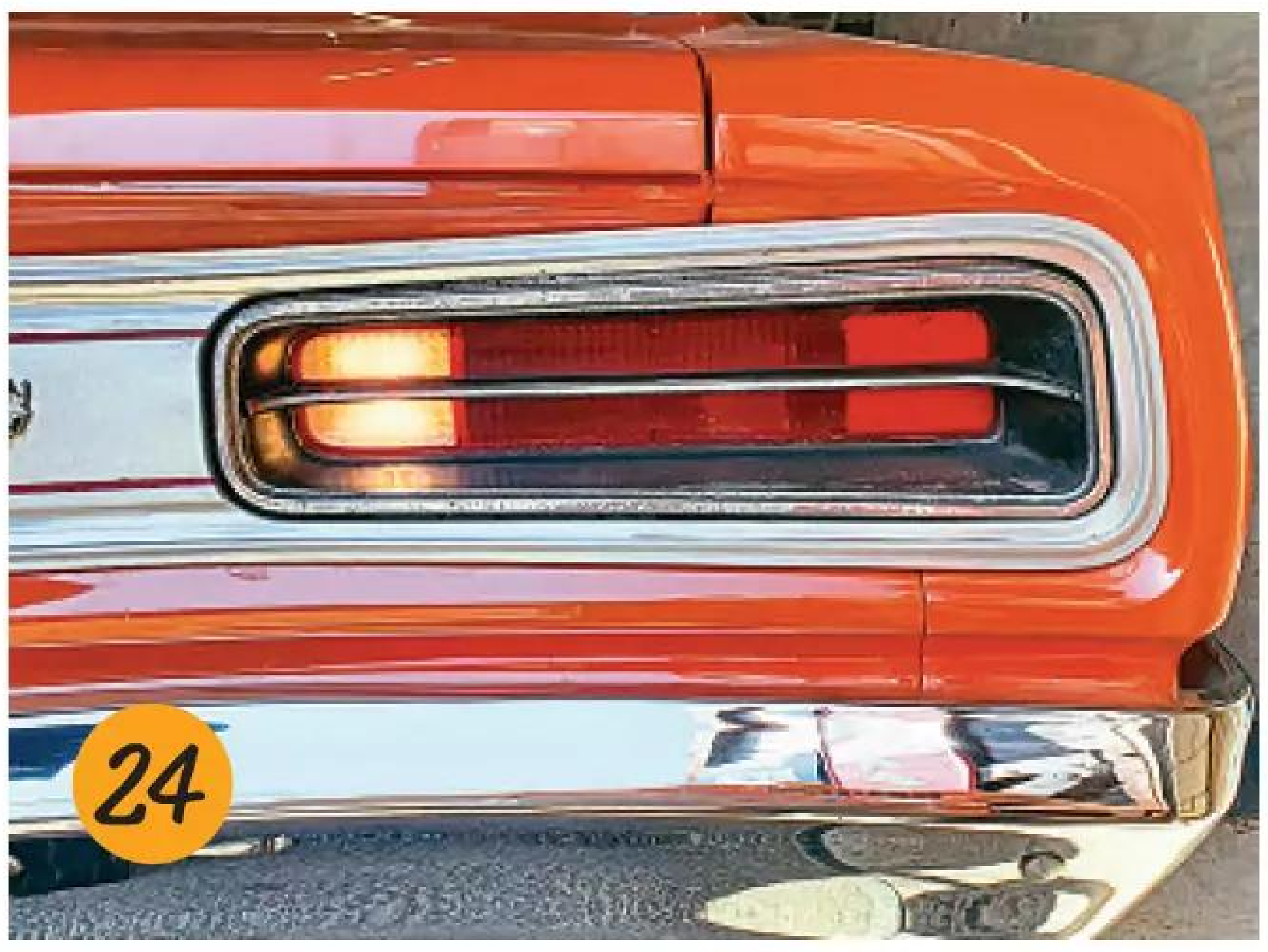






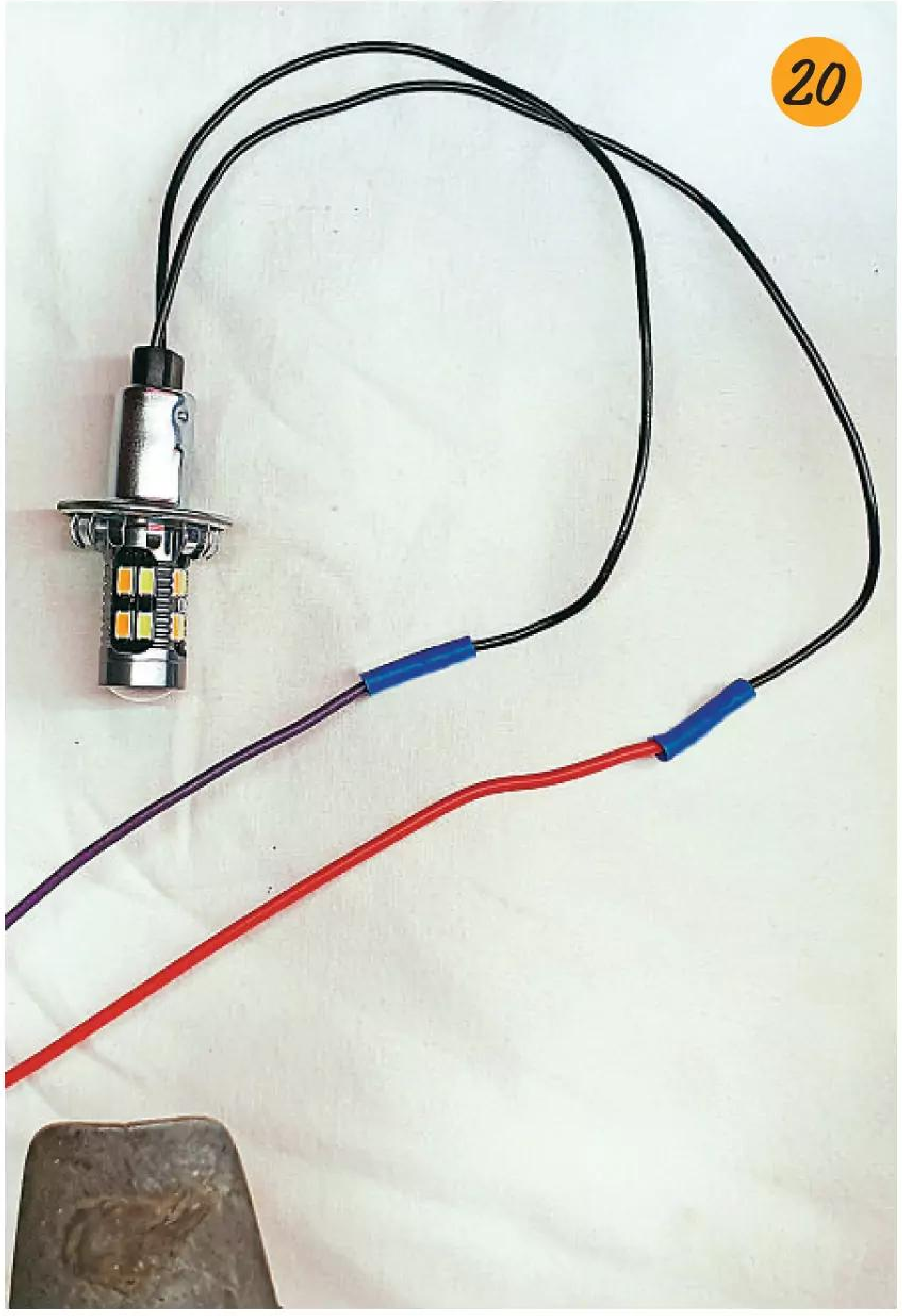






will not be changed. I feel that's important, as in most cases it's unnecessary to add extra lamps which usually look clumsy or, at best, just wrong. With this type of conversion, I will need dual-filament bulb holders to replace the single filament ones, there are some variations here and you will need to determine what will fit your lamp holders (**fig. 19**).

So, back to the rewiring. We now need to cut the indicator/brake wire which feeds the original bulb holder; this is done at both left and right lamps. Obviously, when you do this, leave enough wire on the bulb holder to join into (**fig. 20**). We now move on to the new feed from the brake-light switch (blue wire). This needs to go to both of the original indicator/brake light wires at the bulb holders. As you can see, I've not only brought the feed in, but I've also got a second blue wire coming out. This will go from the left to the right side and link both bulb holders (**fig. 21**). That's it, brakes done!



18. New wire in situ on light fitting.

19. Dual-filament bulb holder options.

20. New bulb holder, with plenty of wire.

21. Brake-light switch (blue wire) fitted.

22. Amber bulb turn indicator illuminated.

23. Dim factory-supplied reversing bulb.

24. Brighter aftermarket reversing bulb.

Now, we have the two wires coming from the loom, which were just cut. These will need to feed into the respective left and right new bulb holders as they will be the turn signals. If you are just doing turn signals, once you have connected these, it's job done. If, like me, you are doing the dual reverse/turn signal, then it's at this point you must determine the correct connection of the holder to connect the feed to, as it will need to illuminate the amber side of the bulb (**fig. 22**). Now, simply connect the reverse-light wire which fed the original bulb holder to the new one. Insert the new bulbs and fit the holders into place. The comparison shows a much brighter white reverse light and will cast a good beam as shown in this comparison (**fig. 23, fig. 24**).

With some vehicles from the 1950s and earlier, the bulb holders may not be removable, as they are part of the lamp assembly. In those cases, you will need to do the relevant wiring. As I have said before, the procedure can vary depending on your vehicle, and obviously colour-coding of wires, but the basics remain the same. In conclusion, some of this is no more than bulb-changing, but if you do that or take it further, I feel you will be pleased with the results. So, let's be safe and let other road users know what we're doing, I would rather avoid a collision than have the repair bill!

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EVENT REPORT

BROOKLANDS MUSEUM, SURREY

April 19, 2025

BROOKLANDS' EASTER CLASSIC

Words and photography: Mike Renaut

1950s Cadillacs showed tailfin evolution.

The joy of an event like the Easter Classic Gathering at Brooklands is you never know what might turn up. Open to all pre-1995 classic cars, there was a great showing of older American machines to intrigue and fascinate the crowds. I immediately spotted the incredible fins of a magnificent 1961 Chrysler convertible, fresh from receiving a *Classic American* magazine Car of the Year nomination at the Wheels Day show the day before. Other convertibles vying for attention nearby included a rare 1961 Oldsmobile mild custom, with lowered suspension and stunning red paint. A droptop gold 1964 Thunderbird sported an unusual Continental kit.

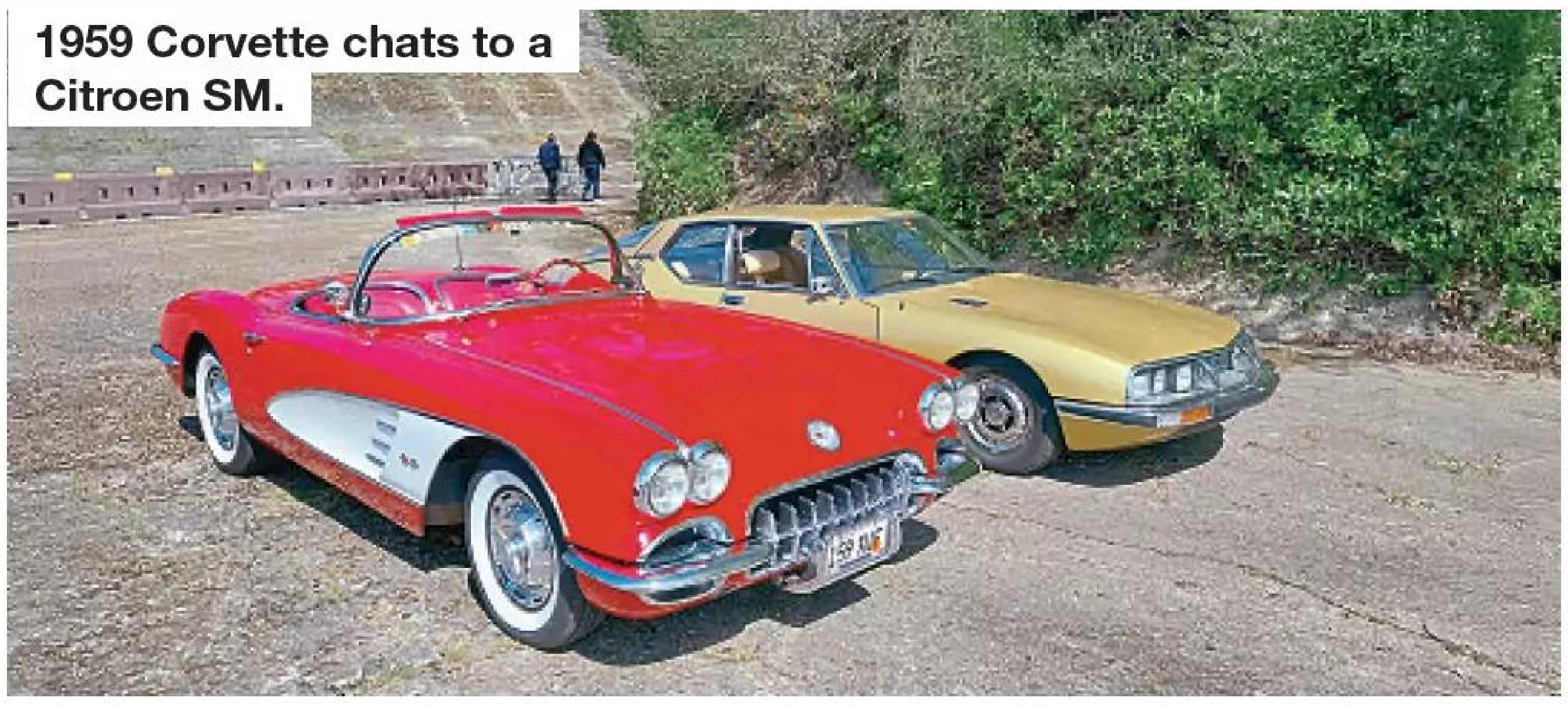
Several interesting pick-ups were displayed and I was drawn to a clean black 1978 Chevrolet Custom Stepside, the high-rise centre of the bonnet suggesting something powerful lurked beneath. Another black truck, this time a 1988 Jeep Grand Wagoneer, reminded me how much I like these wood-sided 4x4s and I spent quite some time looking over the immaculate wagon. A pair of hot-rodded Ford pick-ups made for an interesting contrast, a yellow 1946 alongside a blue 1940 that had been very subtly roof chopped.

Mingling small European sports cars with the larger American iron made for some interesting size comparisons. A 1956 Corvette is not huge but park one next to an MG Midget and it looks enormous. A few metres away a 1959 Corvette was alongside a flamboyant Citroen SM, giving visitors a real dilemma as to which car to look at first. It was also lovely to see an old friend; the blue 1958 Plymouth Savoy sedan we featured back in November 2014 that's still looking factory fresh.

As with many Brooklands shows there was also a selection of autojumble in addition to the site's many other regular attractions.

On a sadder note, one of the more unusual historic vehicles on display at the Easter event, the Oakland Romano Special (which was a replica of the first ever Pikes Peaks winner, using an 8.0-litre Curtiss aero engine on an Oakland chassis) was involved in an accident at Donington Park, Leicestershire on May 24, in which owner Julian Grimwade died.

1956 Corvette dwarves Midget.

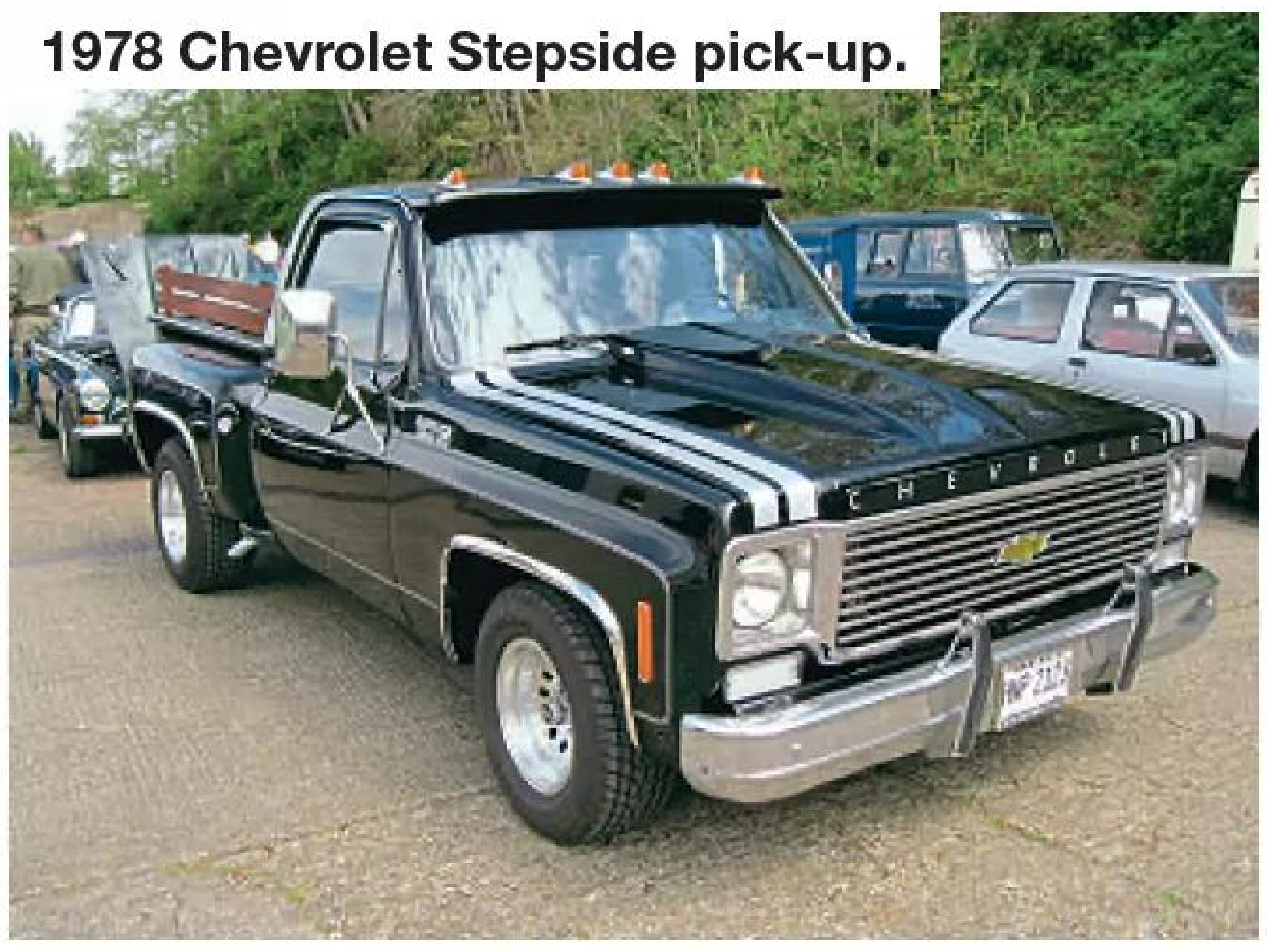

1959 Corvette chats to a Citroen SM.

1957 Chevrolet Bel Air with the equally iconic Concorde.

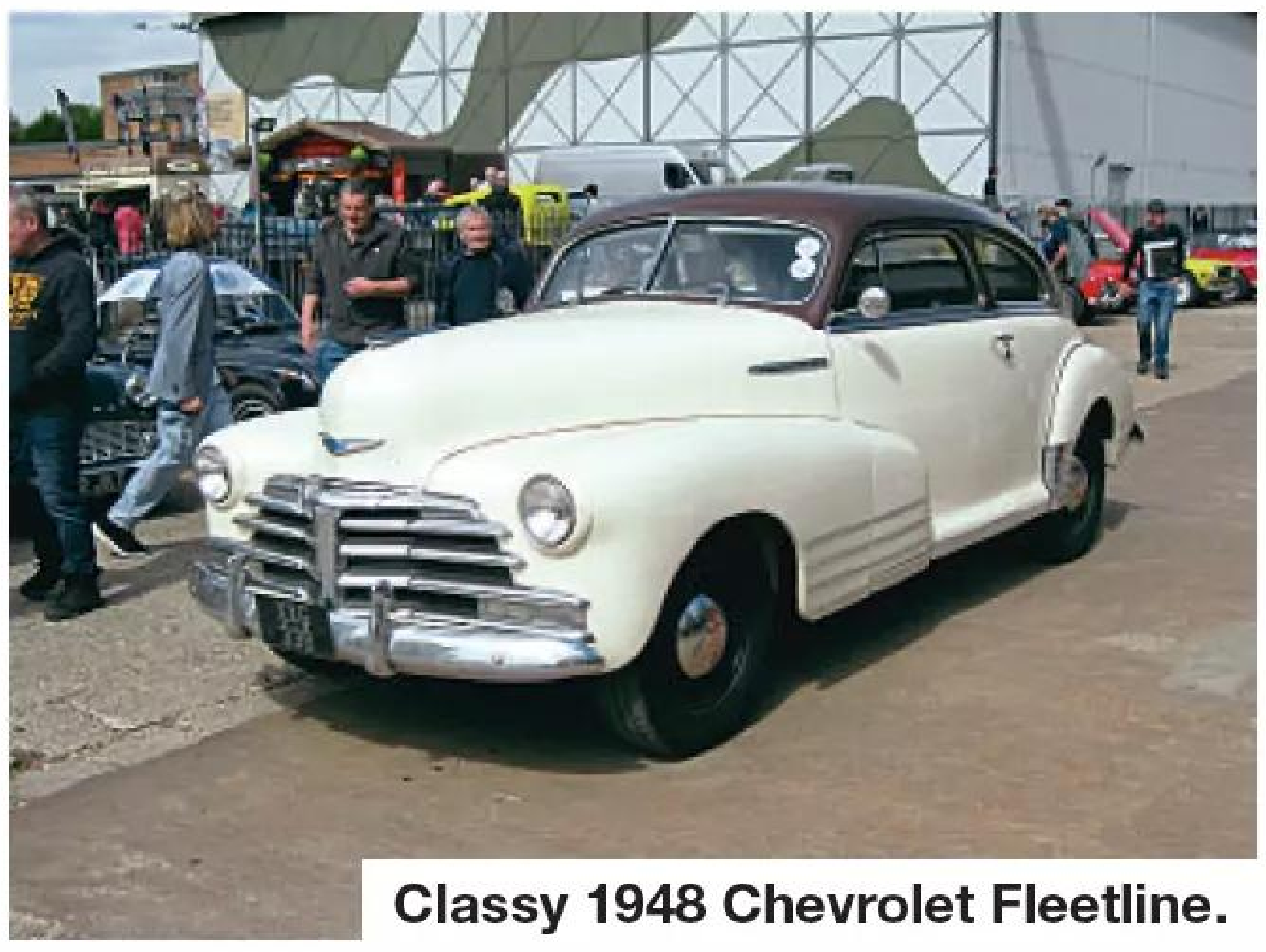
1961 Oldsmobile 88 was mildly customised.

1963 Studebaker is a rare car even in America.

1964 Thunderbird with Continental kit.


1978 Chevrolet Stepside pick-up.

Car of the Year nominee, the 1961 Chrysler, had the biggest fins on the display.


Classy 1948 Chevrolet Fleetline.

Ex-CA feature car, 1958 Plymouth.

Impressive clean Jeep Grand Wagoneer.

Hot rod Ford pick-ups from 1946 and 1940.

Perfect period Model A sported a dressed Flathead.

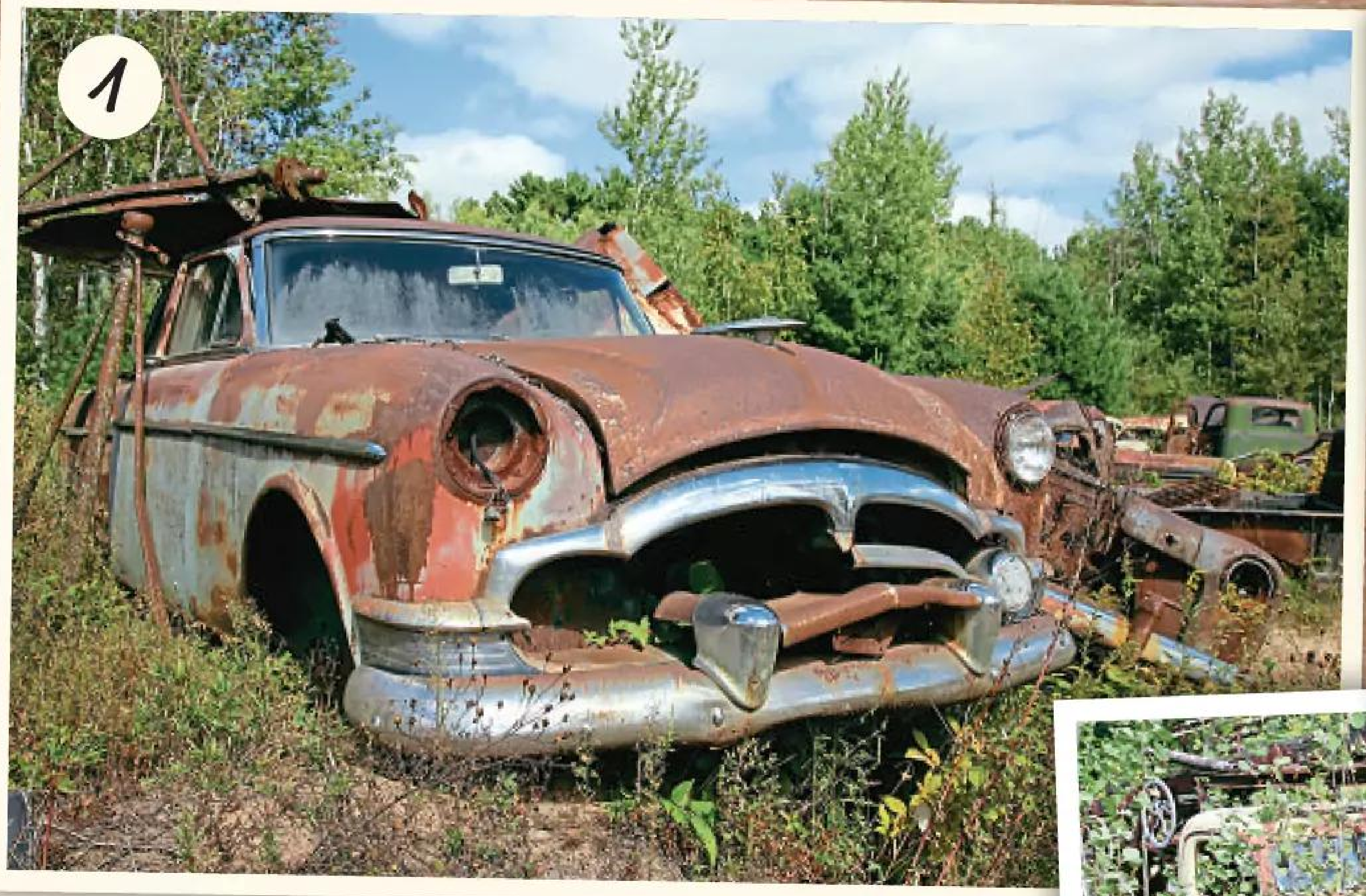
Romano Demon is based on a 1913 Oakland chassis.

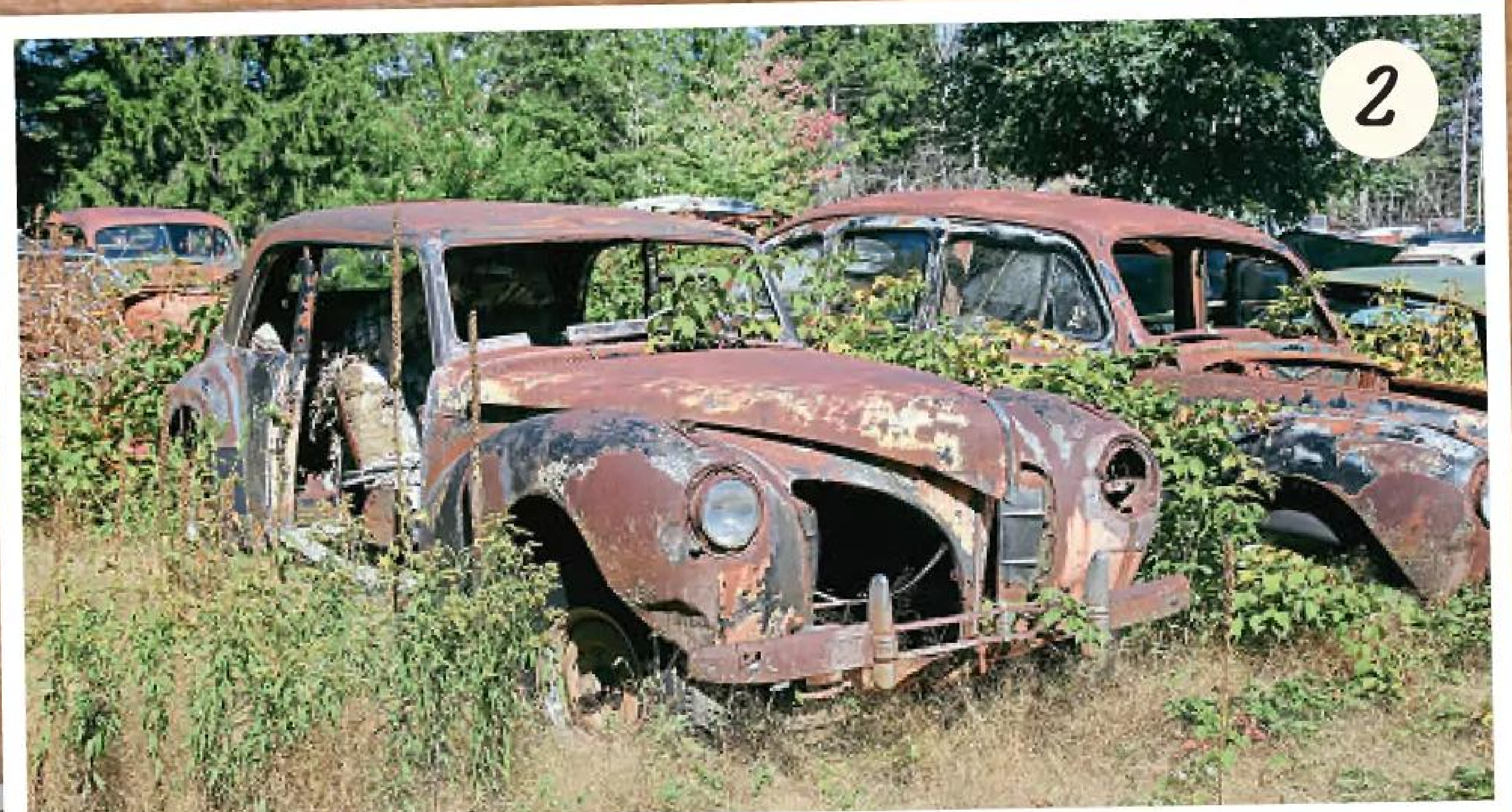
See www.brooklandsmuseum.com for details of upcoming events, including American Day on August 31.

Will Shiers' DISCOVERIES

Words and photography: Will Shiers

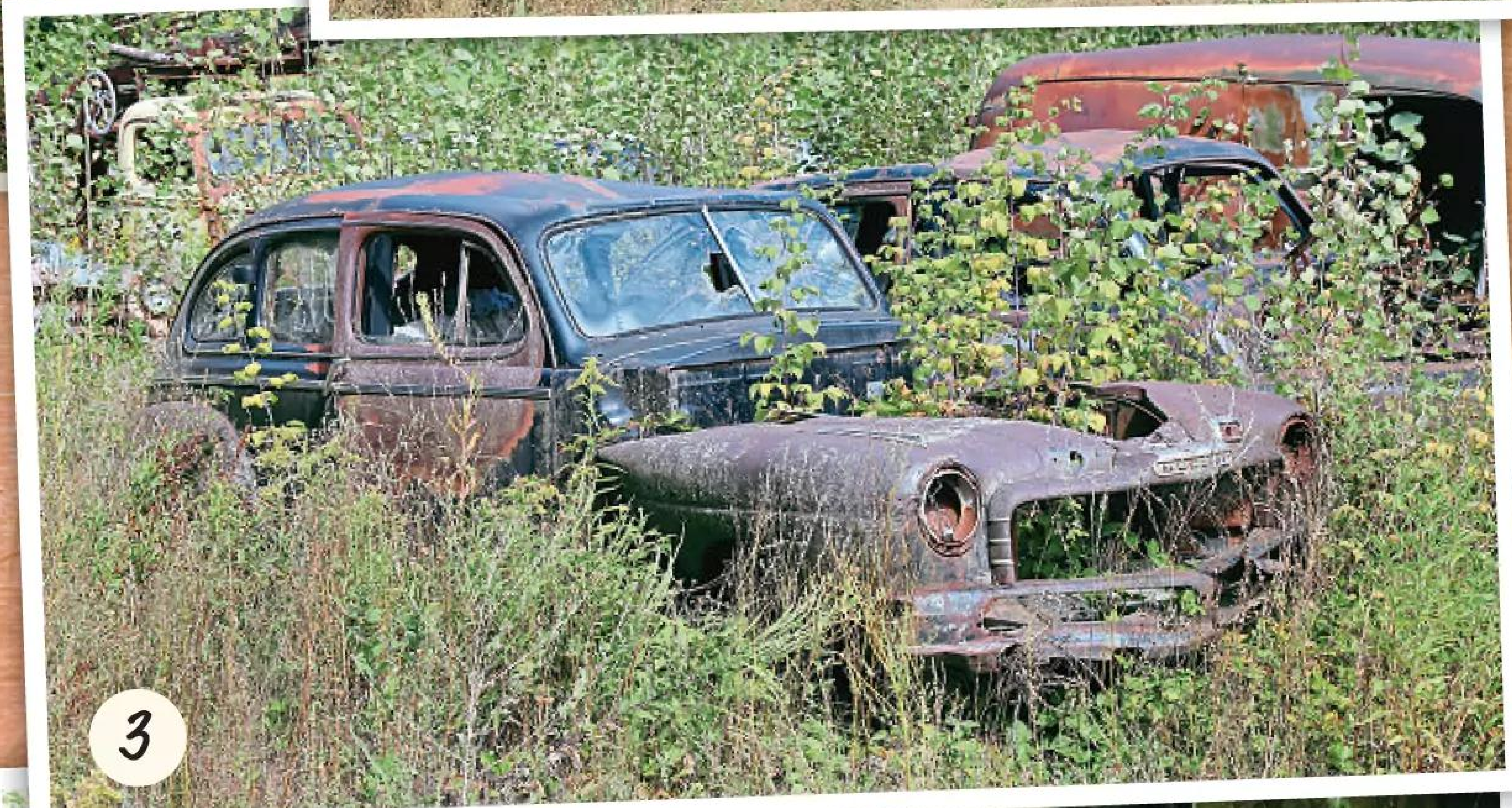
Our intrepid salvage yard explorer brings you junkyard jewels from across North America.



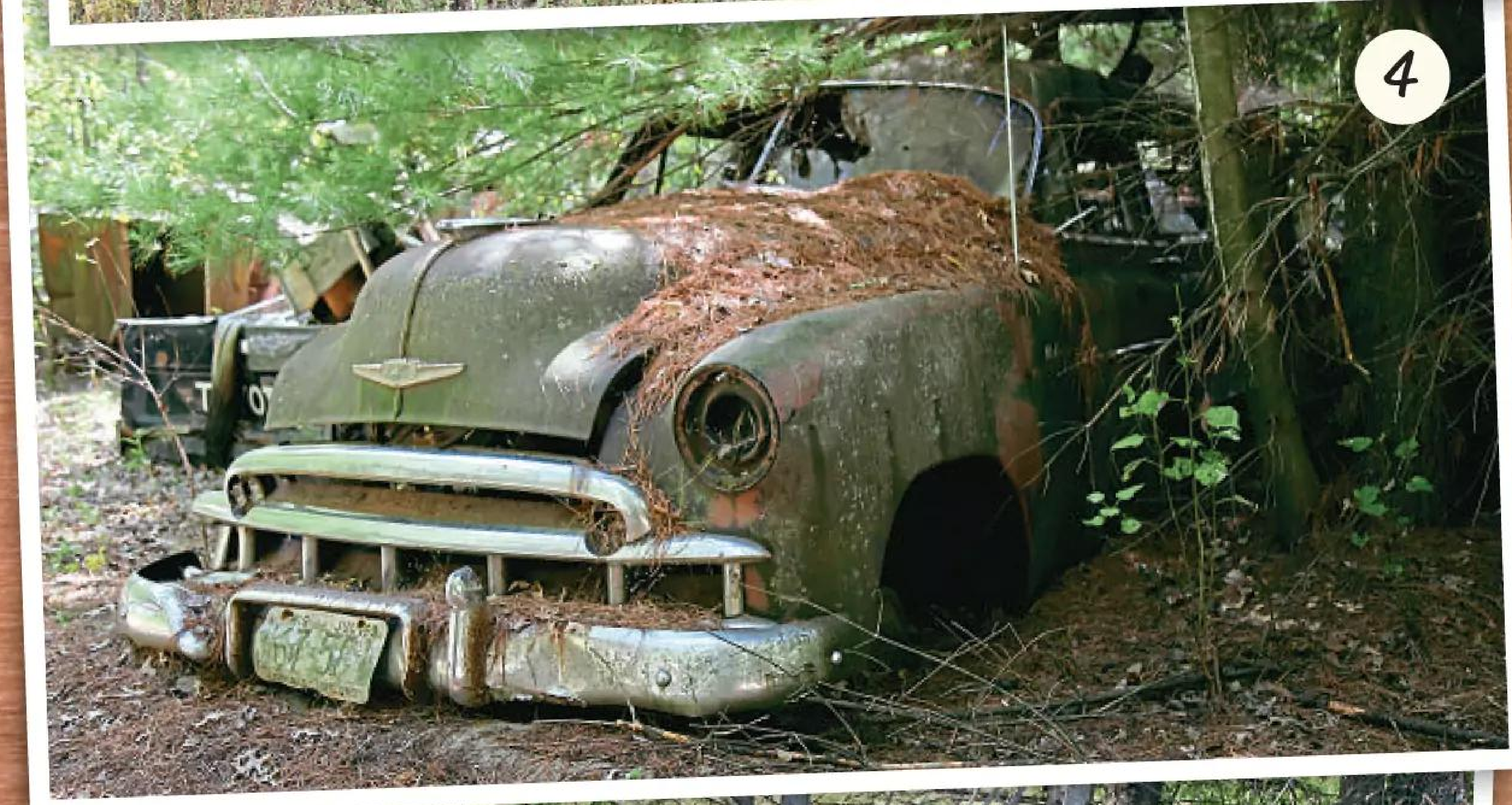


1. Tucked away in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Cooley's Statewide Scrap and Salvage is a sprawling treasure trove of forgotten vehicles and fading marques. Among the rusting relics sits a 1954 Packard Clipper, a car that rolled off the line during the brand's troubled final chapter. That year, Packard's sales collapsed to a third of their previous total, forcing a desperate merger with Studebaker. A brief rebound in 1955 couldn't halt the decline, and like many others at Cooley's, this Clipper stands as a quiet monument to an era that didn't end with a bang, but a slow fade into obscurity.

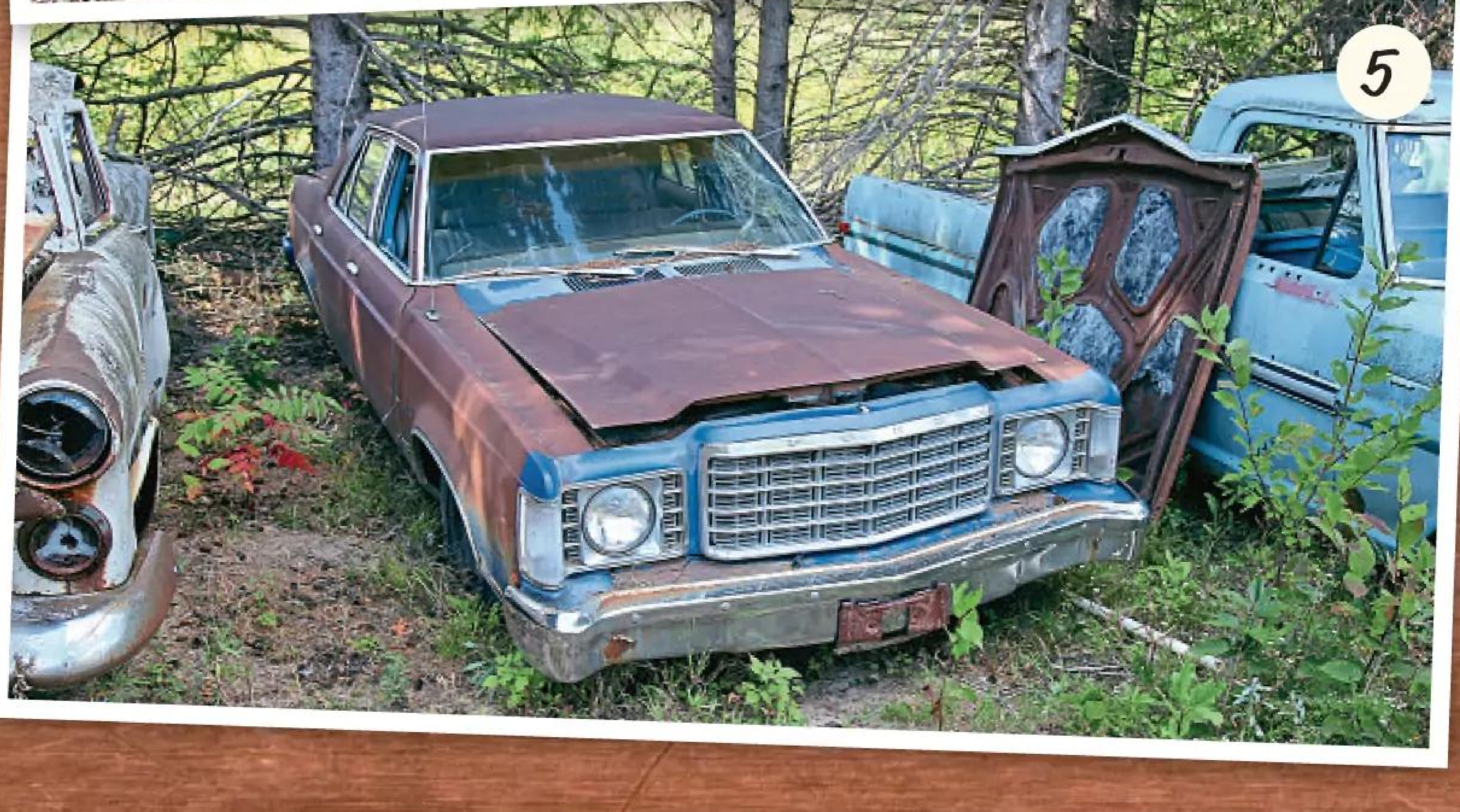
2. Very little remains of this 1941 Lincoln Continental. It's an unusual sight in a scrapyard setting, a rare survivor of a limited-production classic. Originally equipped with a 4.8-litre V12 producing 120bhp (though long since removed), the Continental offered respectable performance for its day. It could reach 60mph in about 18 seconds and topped out just shy of 100mph. Of the 1251 units built that year, only 850 were two-door coupes like this one.

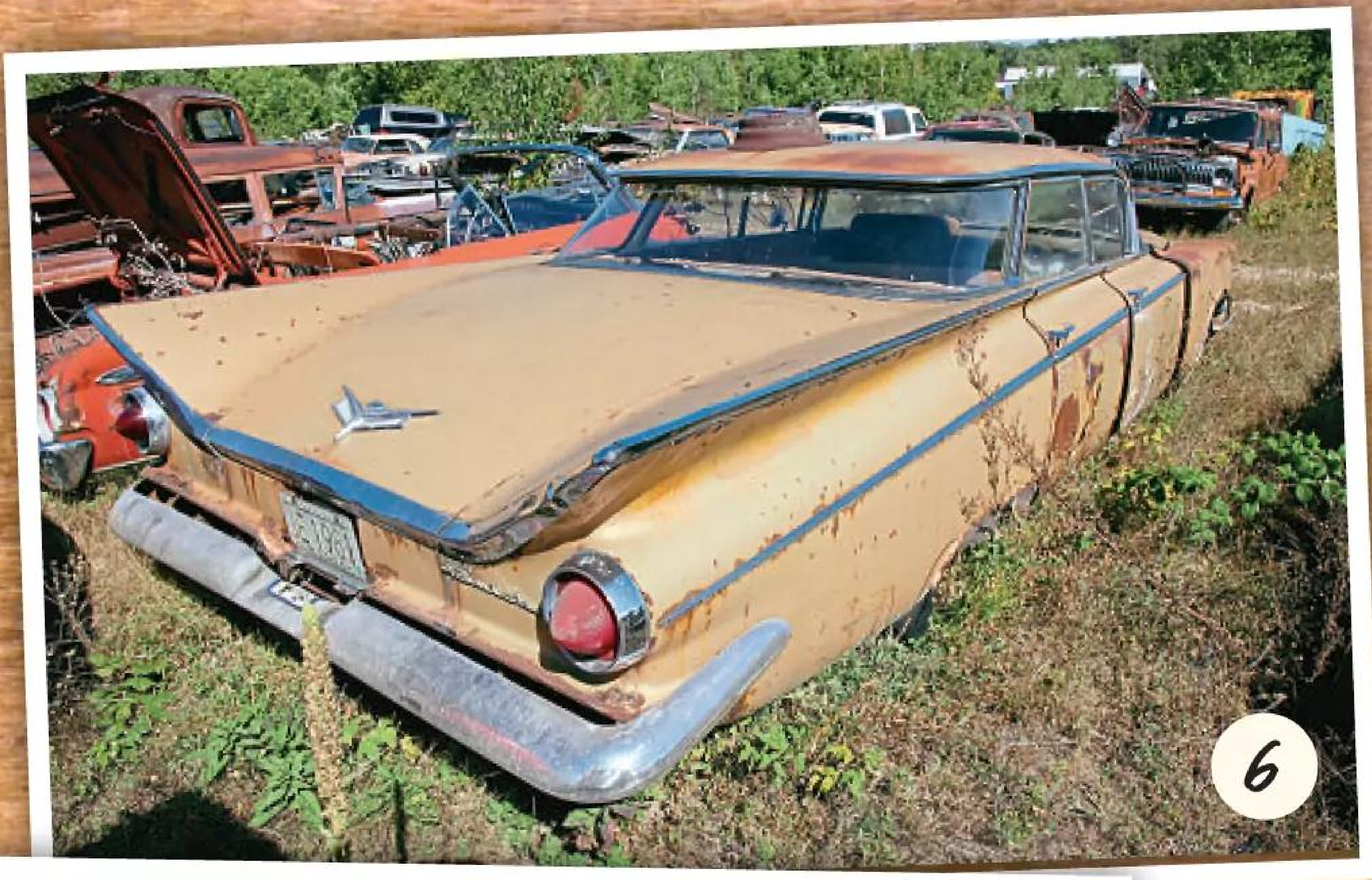


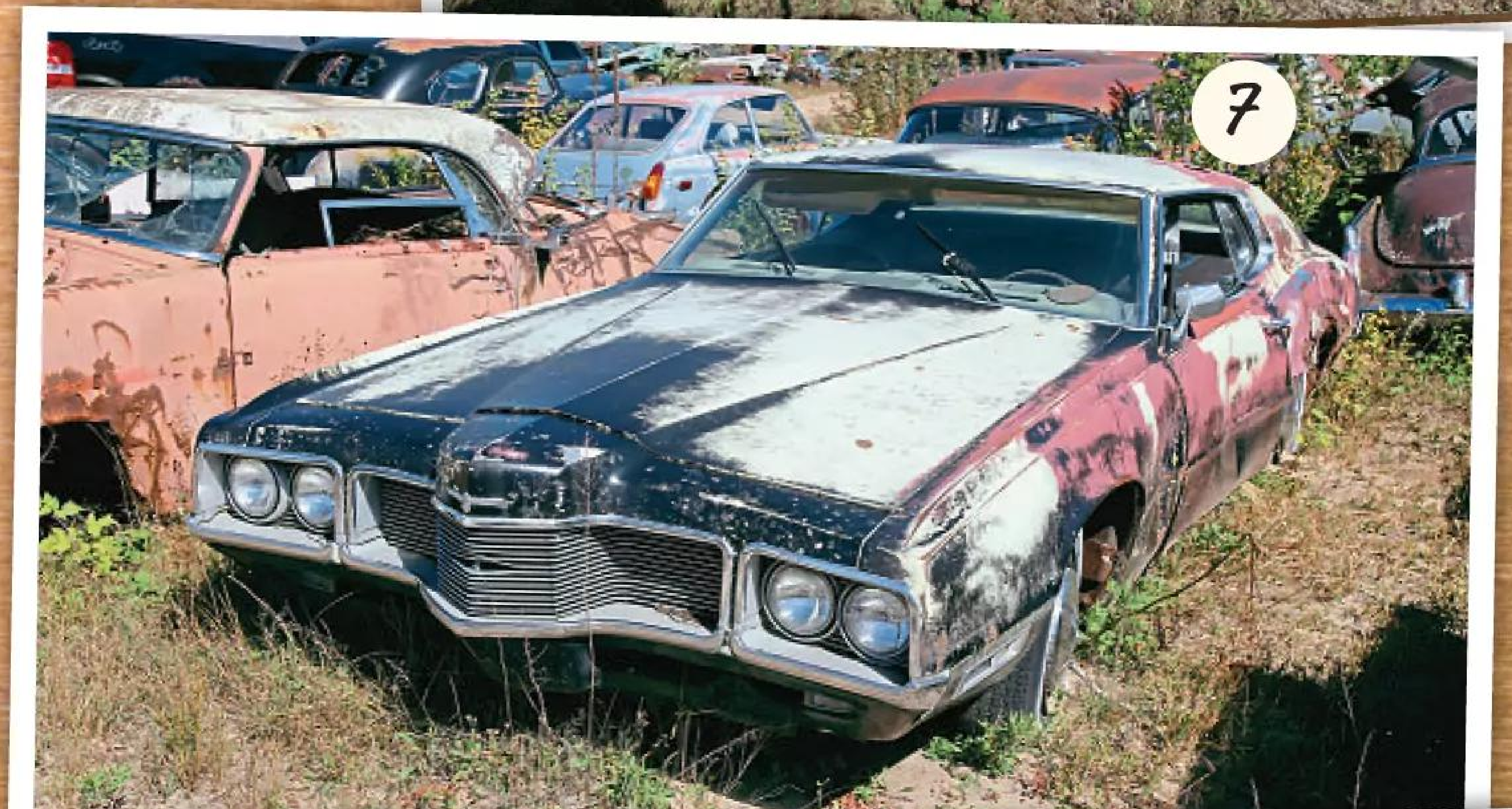
3. Mercury was still a relative newcomer when this stately four-door sedan left the factory in 1946. The marque, created by Edsel Ford in 1938 to bridge the gap between Ford and Lincoln, had only just resumed car production following the wartime shutdown. Built from November 1945 onward, this post-war Mercury helped put Americans back behind the wheel, and with around 87,000 sold, it steered the brand into 10th place on that year's sales charts.

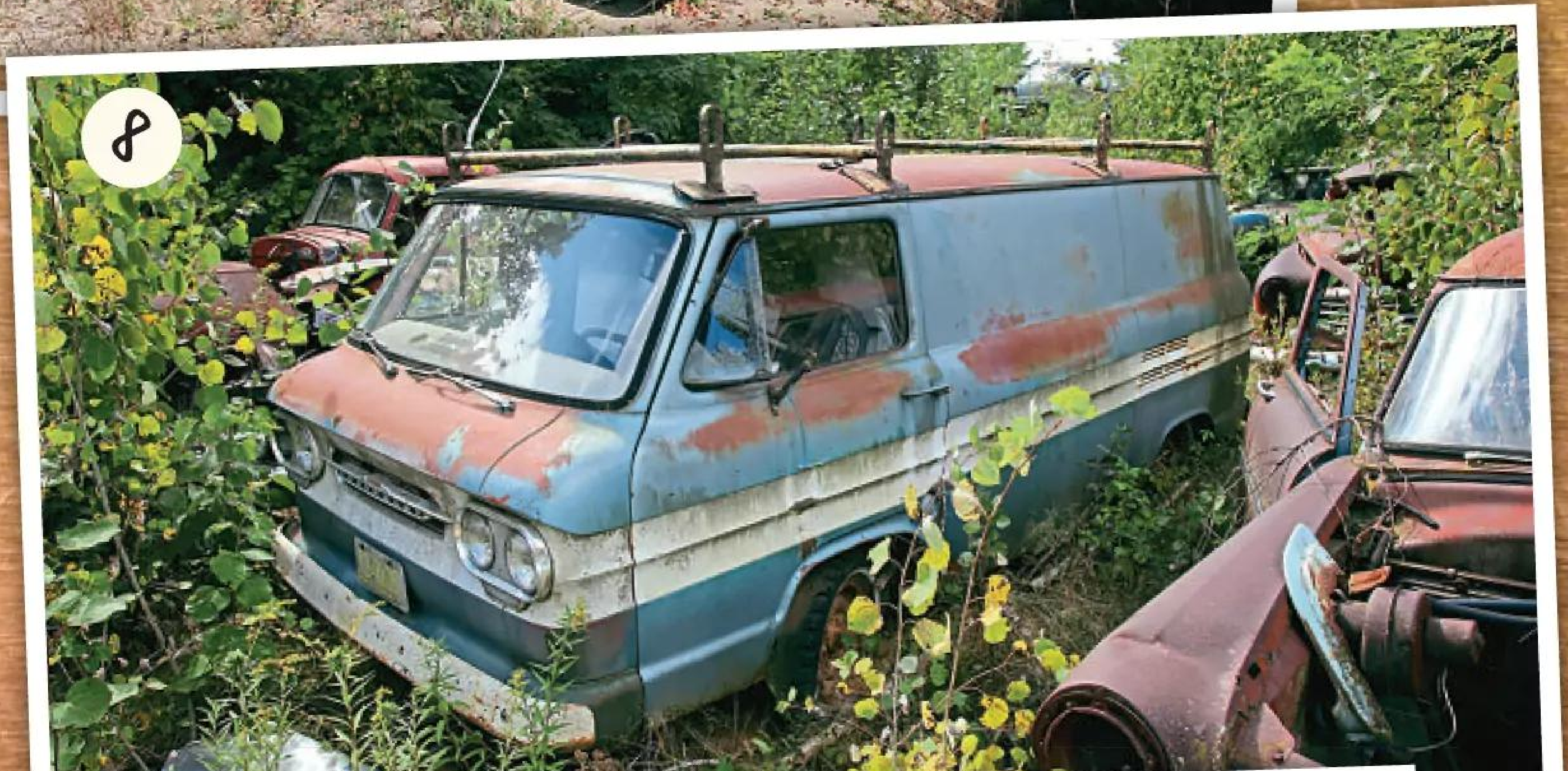


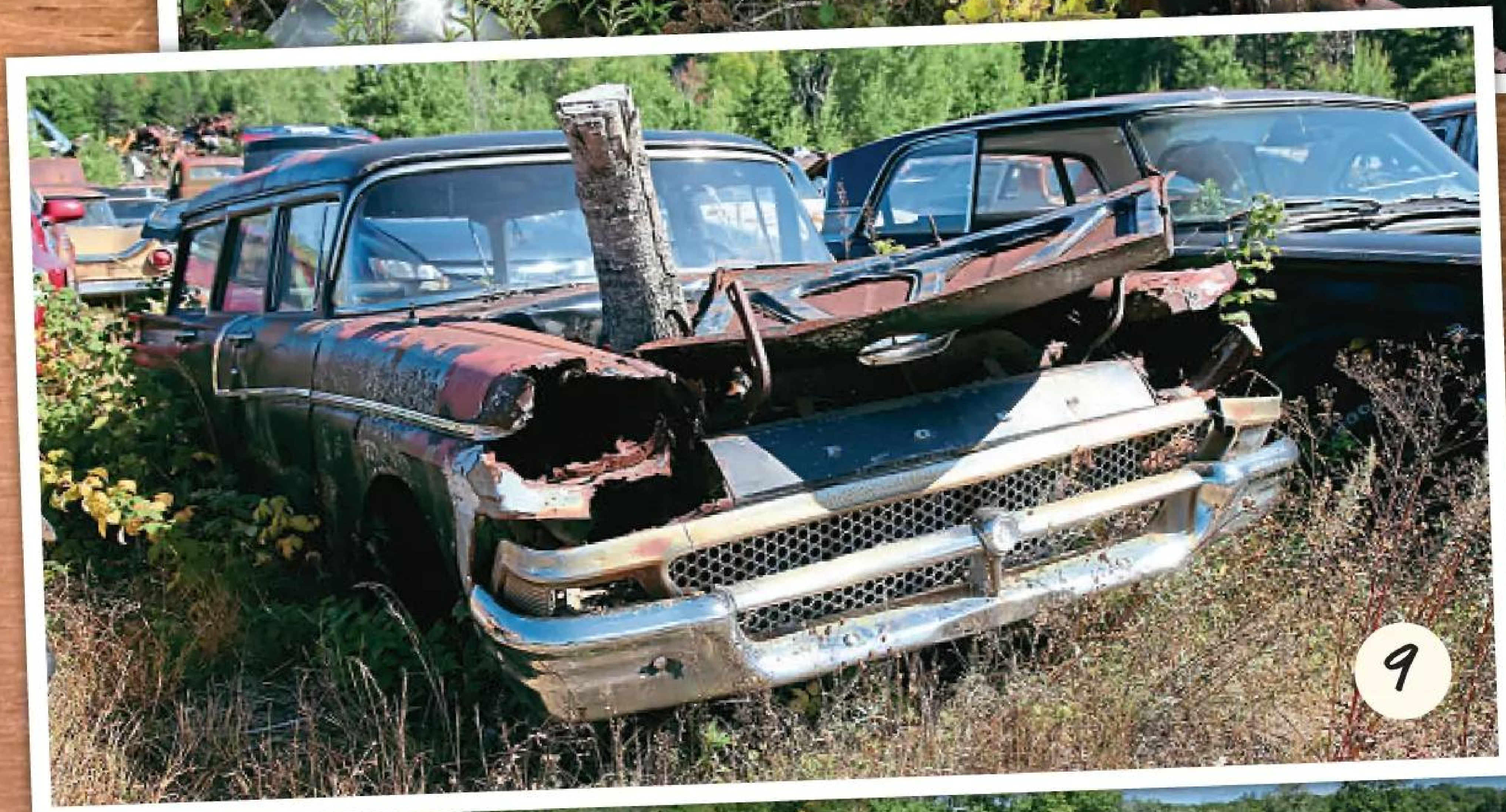
4. Leaving a car beneath pine trees is rarely kind to the bodywork, as damp needles work their way into every crevice and quietly accelerate corrosion. This particular Chevy, identified as a 1949 model by its distinctive grille and round parking light openings, still carries a licence plate dated 1959, suggesting it's been off the road for more than 65 years. It

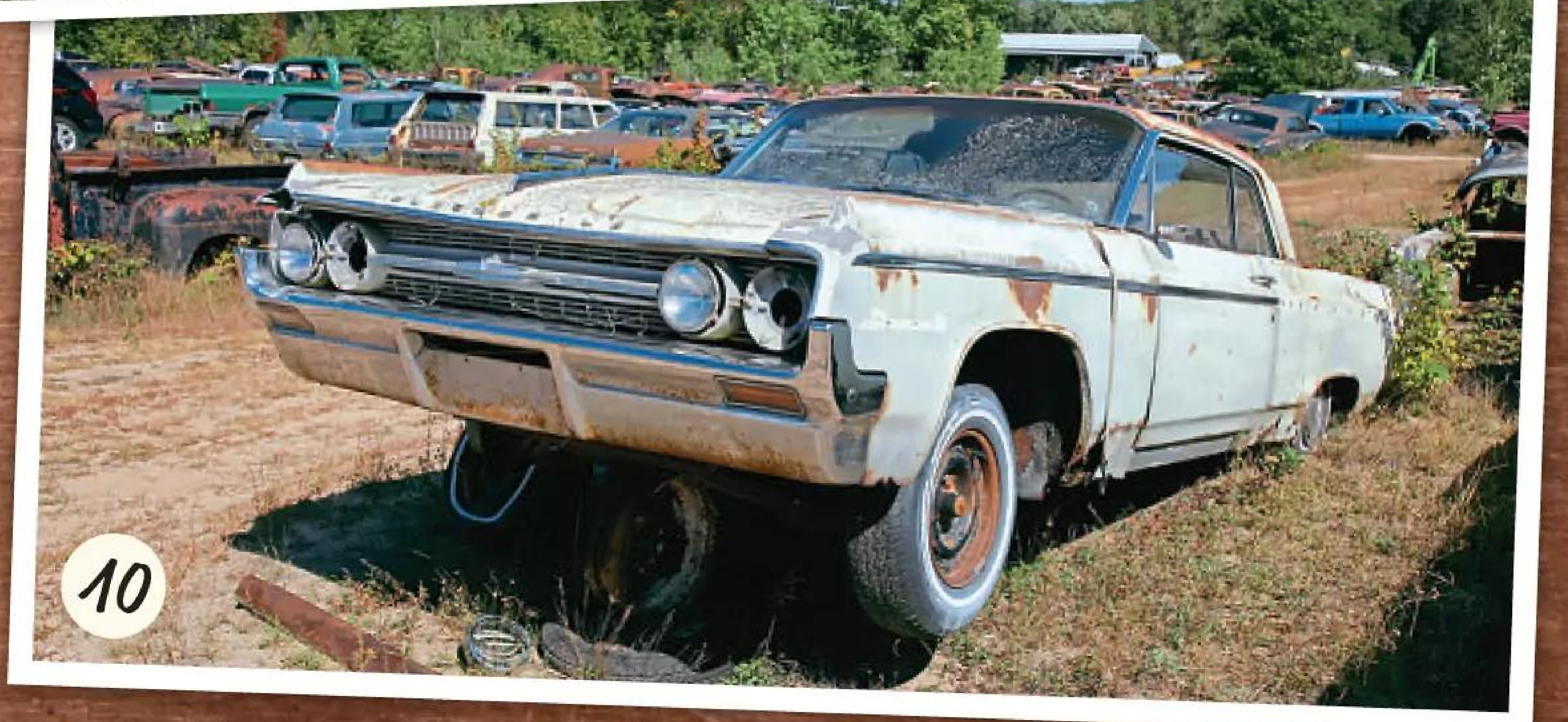












was Chevrolet's first post-war redesign, but despite the bold new look, rival Ford's fresh-faced '49 outsold it by more than 100,000 units.

5. This mid-Seventies Ford Granada four-door might not stir much excitement among classic car fans, but it's worth noting for its completeness. Despite surface rust, it appears solid and intact, a rare sight for a model few thought to preserve. Launched in 1975, the Granada slotted between the Maverick and Torino in Ford's line-up, offering a touch of luxury in a compact package. It proved popular, with more than two million built before production ended in 1982.

6. Tattered around the edges it may be, but this 1959 Buick LeSabre four-door hardtop is impressively complete. Under the bonnet originally sat a 250hp, 364cu in/6.0-litre V8 – the same engine used across the Buick range in 1957 and 1958. It was no slouch either, capable of 112mph and a quarter-mile time of 17.6 seconds.

7. This fifth-generation Ford Thunderbird dates from the tail end of the model's 1967-1971 run, a period that started strong, but saw sales taper off as the years wore on. In an effort to reignite interest, Ford restyled the car for 1970, giving it a sharper, more aggressive look. The most noticeable change was the bold, beak-like grille and crisp-edged bonnet, a nod to the Thunderbird name. Time hasn't been kind to this one. Though mostly complete, it's thoroughly rotten, its flying days long behind it.

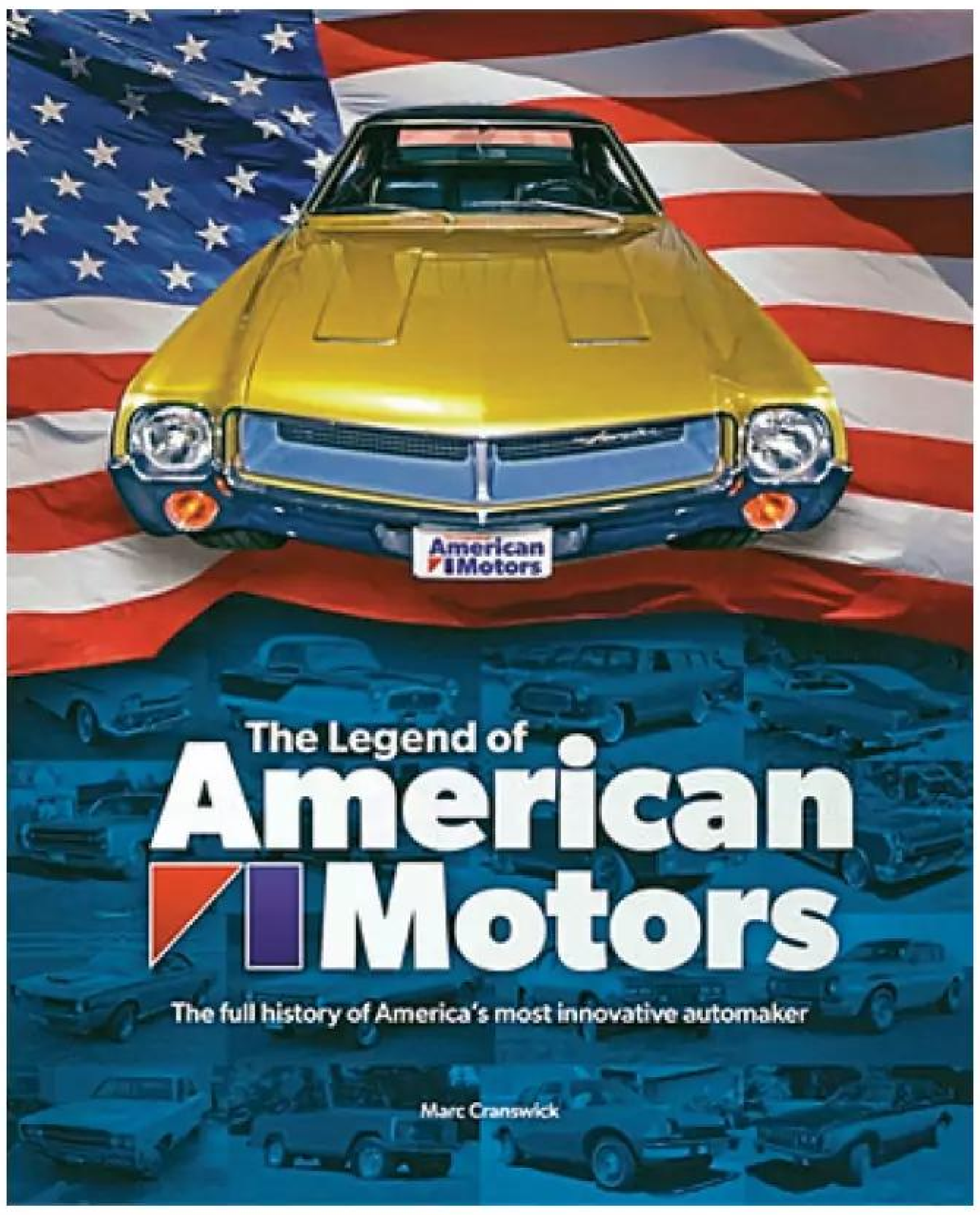
8. Chevrolet's answer to the VW Transporter arrived in 1961 in the form of the Corvair 95 panel van, powered by the same rear-mounted flat-six found in its passenger car siblings. It had clever packaging, a respectable payload, and strong load-lugging credentials, but buyers never quite warmed to it the way Chevrolet had hoped. Sales lagged behind expectations, and the Corvan faded into obscurity. This early example looks surprisingly solid, complete with a set of home-made roof bars that add a bit of backyard ingenuity to the mix.

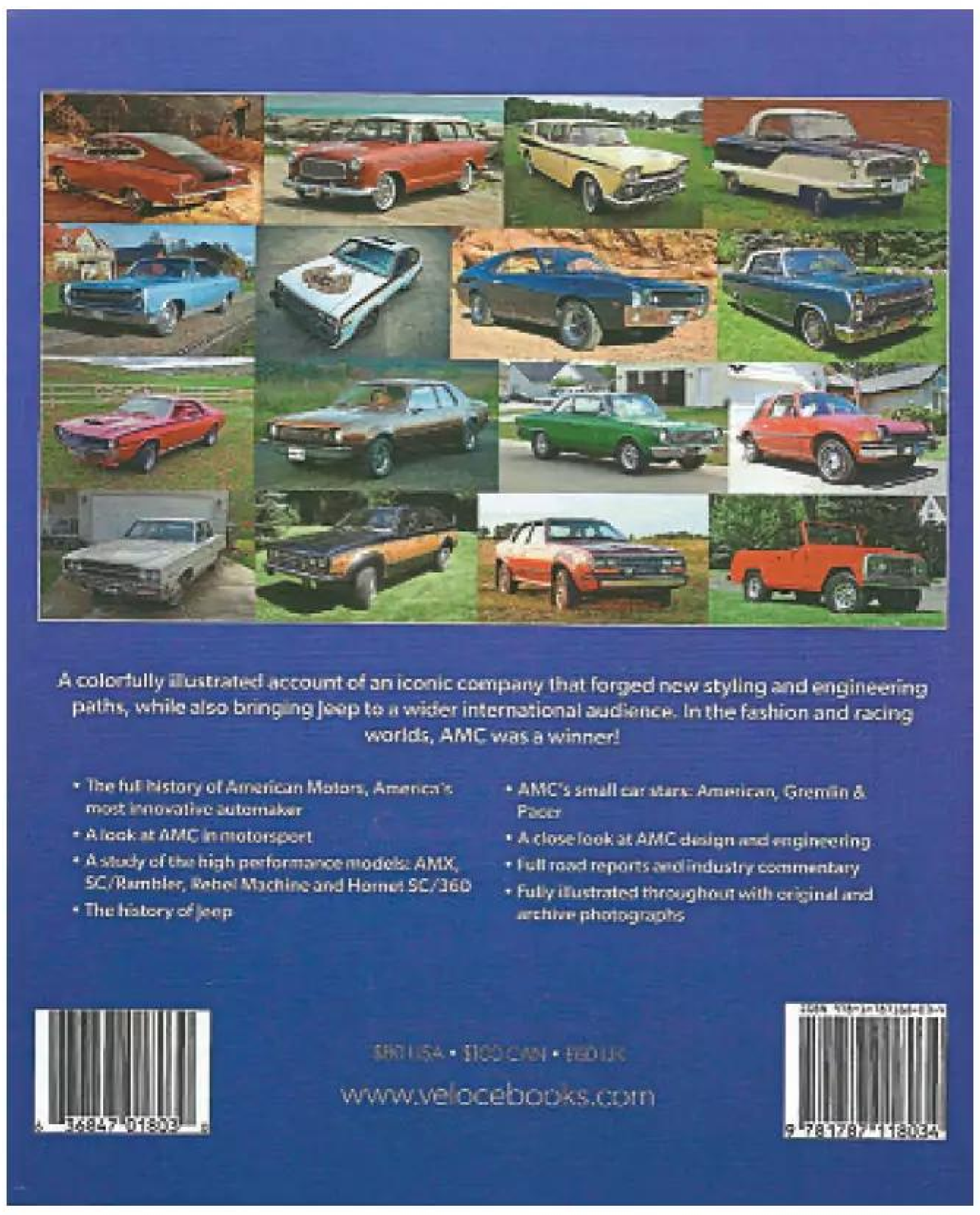
9. At some point, nature quite literally took root in this 1958 Ford Ranch Wagon – a tree once grew straight out of the engine bay, effectively pinning the car to the spot. Judging by the stump's diameter, it must've stood there for two decades or more before being cut down.

10. There's something about the stance of this 1964 Oldsmobile Dynamic 88 that suggests it's moments away from lift-off. Just how far it might go would've depended on which version of the 394cu in /6.4-litre Rocket V8 it left the factory with. The 3360bhp version could crack 60mph in 8.7 seconds and top out at 127mph, making flight seem almost plausible. It's a two-door Holiday hardtop, one of 32,369 produced that year.

The Legend of American Motors – The Full History of America's Most Innovative Automaker

Author: Marc Cranswick
Published by: Veloce Publishing
ISBN: 978-1-787-118-03-4
Price: £60




A colorfully illustrated account of an iconic company that forged new styling and engineering paths, while also bringing Jeep to a wider international audience. In the fashion and racing worlds, AMC was a winner!

- The full history of American Motors, America's most innovative automaker
- A look at AMC in motorsport
- A study of the high performance models: AMX, SC/Rambler, Rebel Machine and Hornet SC/360
- The history of Jeep
- AMC's small car stars: American, Gremlin & Pacer
- A close look at AMC design and engineering
- Full road reports and industry commentary
- Fully illustrated throughout with original and archive photographs

www.velocebooks.com

Well-established Veloce author Marc Cranswick took on a potentially mammoth task when he started to recount the history of the American Motors Corporation (AMC). Although it was only formed as late as 1954, it had a complex history until it was absorbed by Chrysler in 1987-88 and ceased to be an independent car manufacturer at that point. AMC was the sum of its parts.

In the immediate post-war years, things were getting increasingly difficult for the independent automakers. They had managed in some cases to bring new models to the showrooms quite quickly, rather than slightly modified pre-war designs, but they couldn't seriously compete with the "big three" of Ford, General Motors and Chrysler. The solution was collaboration between the smaller companies, sharing designs, engineering and facilities to rationalise model ranges and to cut costs.

The first two companies that merged were the Nash-Kelvinator Corporation and the Hudson Motor Car Company. The merger, the largest of its type at that time, was reasonably successful, with reduced vehicle prices and increased sales. This encouraged talks with another independent, Packard, which produced the Ultramatic automatic transmission that AMC wanted for its cars. At the same time, Packard was acquiring Studebaker. Always seeking an edge, AMC started to move away from ever larger cars, bucking the trend at the time and, with its Rambler line, aimed for the increasingly popular economy car market. It seems that not everyone wanted a chrome-encrusted monster, though the company hedged its bets by maintaining the larger Ambassador line.

Having captured a large proportion of the compact market with its successful Rambler in the early 1960s, AMC worked hard to gain an edge in a constantly aggressive market. It introduced distinctive and attractive new cars, with features we accept as the norm today, but which were way ahead of its competitors at the time, for example, disc brakes as standard on the fastback Marlin. Twin brake master cylinders for front and rear braking systems, adjustable seat backrests and air conditioning as standard on certain models were all AMC innovations. These and more kept the marque reasonably competitive, as did special editions and its own versions of the developing muscle car market. The AMX and Javelin were great cars, popular with drivers and competitive on the track.

AMC continued to watch the market and, seeing that the Big Three had little to offer in the way of 4x4 vehicles and in anticipation of the public's desire for recreational vehicles with off-road capability, took the opportunity to buy Kaiser-Jeep in the early 1970s. The Jeep brand was the market leader in this niche area, with the added advantage of government contracts for public service and military variants. Indeed, the military and special products business was reconfigured into American Motors' General Products Division, which later became AM General and expanded into bus manufacture.

All this and much more is described in great detail by the author in his own inimitable style, combining an interesting text with many excellent photographs of vehicles through the years, interspersed with contemporary adverts. The meat of the story takes place during AMC's expansion during the 1960s onwards, where the marque, for a period, held its own in the compact segment of the market. AMC then established itself as a provider of well-designed, practical vehicles, with ground-breaking practical and safety features, some introduced many years ahead of its much larger rivals.

There are, of course, individual chapters on the early years following the merger while the company was establishing the brands. The Rambler receives considerable attention, as do subsequent models including the Javelin and AMX, the Hornet, Gremlin, full-size Ambassador, Matador, the odd-looking Pacer and the Concord. The book describes the acquisition of Jeep, the gradually increasing losses during the 1970s and the additional problems caused by the worldwide petrol crises caused by the oil embargo in '73 and, later, the Iranian revolution. Optimism returned for a while as AMC brokered a deal with French auto manufacturer Renault, which acquired a significant percentage of the business in exchange for manufacturing rights for the Renault 5, known in the States as 'Le Car'. Nevertheless, the writing was on the wall and ultimately AMC was swallowed by Chrysler in the late 1980s, which itself had been on the brink of bankruptcy only a few short years previously.

It is a fascinating and relatively complicated history, covering a mere 34 years of automotive production. This is a beautifully produced and high quality, hard-backed tome of 352 glossy pages. Clearly a labour of love, all the successes, convolutions and failures are described and illustrated. I'll not think of AMC in quite the same way again. Highly recommended!

Richard Coney

Scale autos

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PAGE 20

2024 Ford Mustang Dark Horse

The seventh-generation S650 Ford Mustang was first revealed at the 2022 North American International Auto Show and production versions were available to buy at dealerships from May 2023. There were three street versions on offer, as with previous incarnations: the twin turbocharged EcoBoost, the 5.0-litre V8-powered GT and a new variation, with additional power which replaced the Mach I and Shelby models that had been previously available.

The Eco-Boost and GT are available in both coupe and convertible body styles, while the Dark Horse, with its 500bhp, is only in coupe form. Each has unique front sheet metal. Here in the UK, we can choose from the GT in coupe and convertible form and the Dark Horse. The EcoBoost was dropped from the range several years ago, allegedly due to inadequate sales, despite the performance being similar to the V8-powered GT.

It was inevitable that the model manufacturers would be quick to produce miniature versions of this new-gen Mustang. This 1:32 scale Dark Horse from Jada Toys is the first I've had the opportunity to inspect. While I don't go for the black fading to pink paint, I understand why, as it is one of Jada's Pink Slip range. Curiously, while historically the American term 'pink slip' was generally slang for a vehicle's Certificate of Title, much like a logbook over here, more recently it refers to a notification of dismissal from employment, due to the widespread use of pink paper on these termination letters.

The model, while simple in construction and budget priced, actually looks quite good. It has a pleasingly low stance. The bonnet and grille appear correct for the Dark Horse variant and there are Dark Horse emblems on the sides and the centre of the rear panel. The doors open to reveal Ford's new hi-tech electronic screen. This is a wide, curved, digital display, which contains both the driving instruments and the infotainment system, providing access to the radio/media options, heating settings and the sat nav. The black wheels are really quite nice and the front and rear lights have appropriately coloured clear lenses. Not bad for a model retaining at under £20.

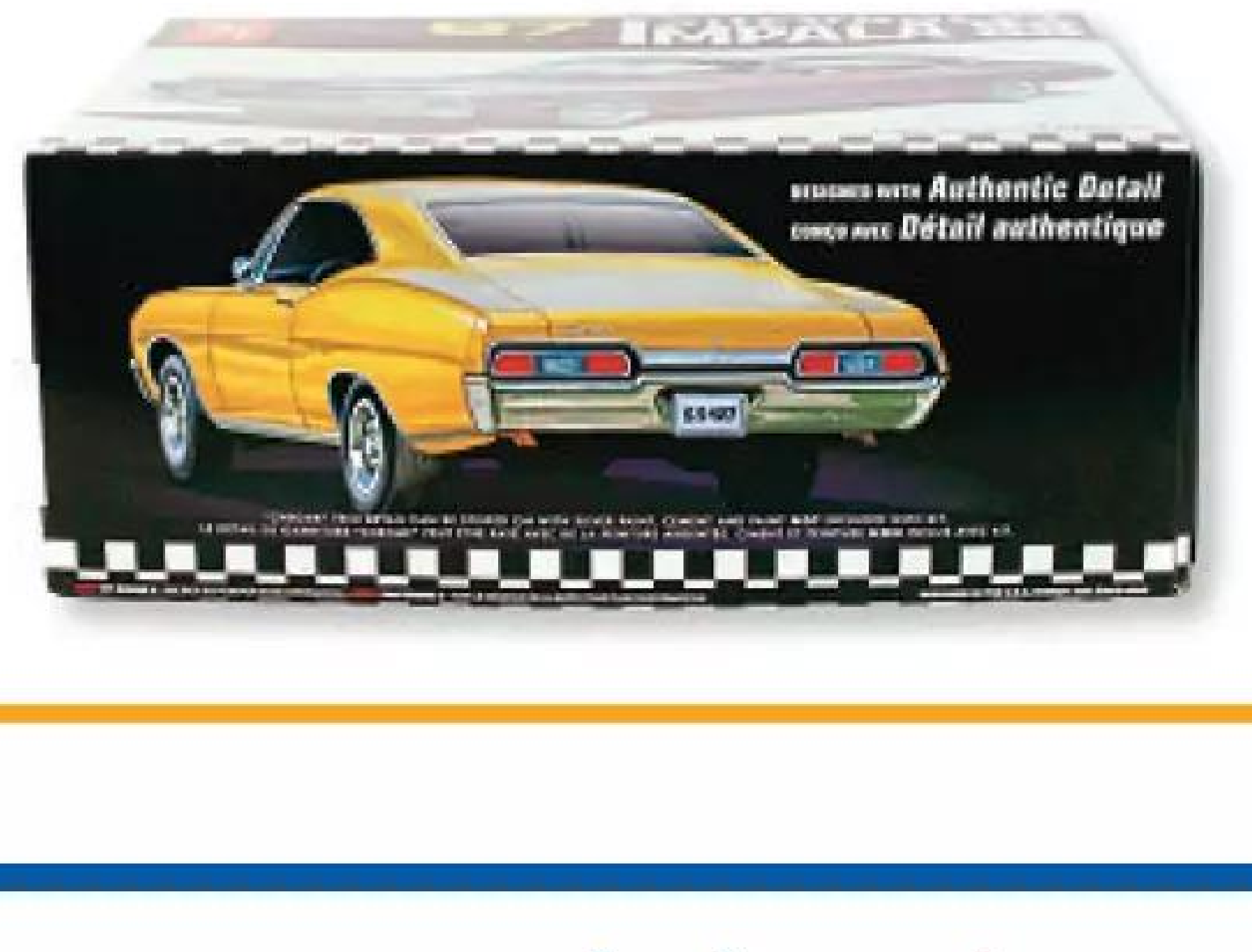
AMT 1967 Chevrolet Impala SS

When you think back about mid-Sixties Chevrolet muscle cars you tend to think of Camaros and Chevelles. In doing so you overlook an extremely popular Chevy that sold in huge numbers and could be ordered with relatively modest six-cylinder engines, up to tarmac-melting 7.0-litre V8s. The Impala was Chevy's full-size car, produced as a two- and four-door Sports Coupe and Sports Sedan, both with a pillarless body, a more formal notchback style two-door Custom Coupe, a convertible, a four-door saloon and a station wagon.

By 1965 Chevy was on its fourth-generation Impala, which continued until 1970, though the cars received styling updates throughout the production run. For 1967, while the Impala retained its 119-inch wheelbase, four inches longer than the Chevelle, it received a major facelift, adopting the so-called 'Coke bottle' styling. The upmarket versions were the most luxurious offered by the company, with sumptuous interiors, wood panelling and advanced instrumentation. The SS version could be ordered with a 385 horsepower 427cu in Turbo-Jet V8 and a choice of three- and four-speed manual transmissions and an automatic.

It would appear that back in 1997, AMT produced a new 1:25 scale tool of the '67 Impala fastback coupe with the 427cu in V8 as a stock vehicle. It has reappeared several times since then, most recently in 2021, with new vintage-style box art. The differences between a freshly tooled car kit and one from the Sixties is clear when you look at the detail that is now included. There is a rather strange non-verbal, speeded-up assembly of this kit available to view on YouTube. Ideally turn down the music too. It shows the additional work AMT/Ertl put into the kit's construction, including its multi-part engine, with separate cylinder heads and valve detail, in case you wish to display it without the valve covers.

The suspension, front and rear is also well designed and attaches to a separate chassis. This includes the A-arms, coil springs, shock absorbers, steering rack, etc. The interior remains the traditional bucket assembly, but the side panels attach, providing opportunity to paint them before gluing in place. It has more than 100 parts and stock Rally wheels. There are no custom options. The waterslide decal sheet has been expanded but is quite modest. It is moulded in white plastic, with clear, clear red and chrome parts. As per usual, online prices vary, but I found one at under £27, which can't be bad. It's worth a look!



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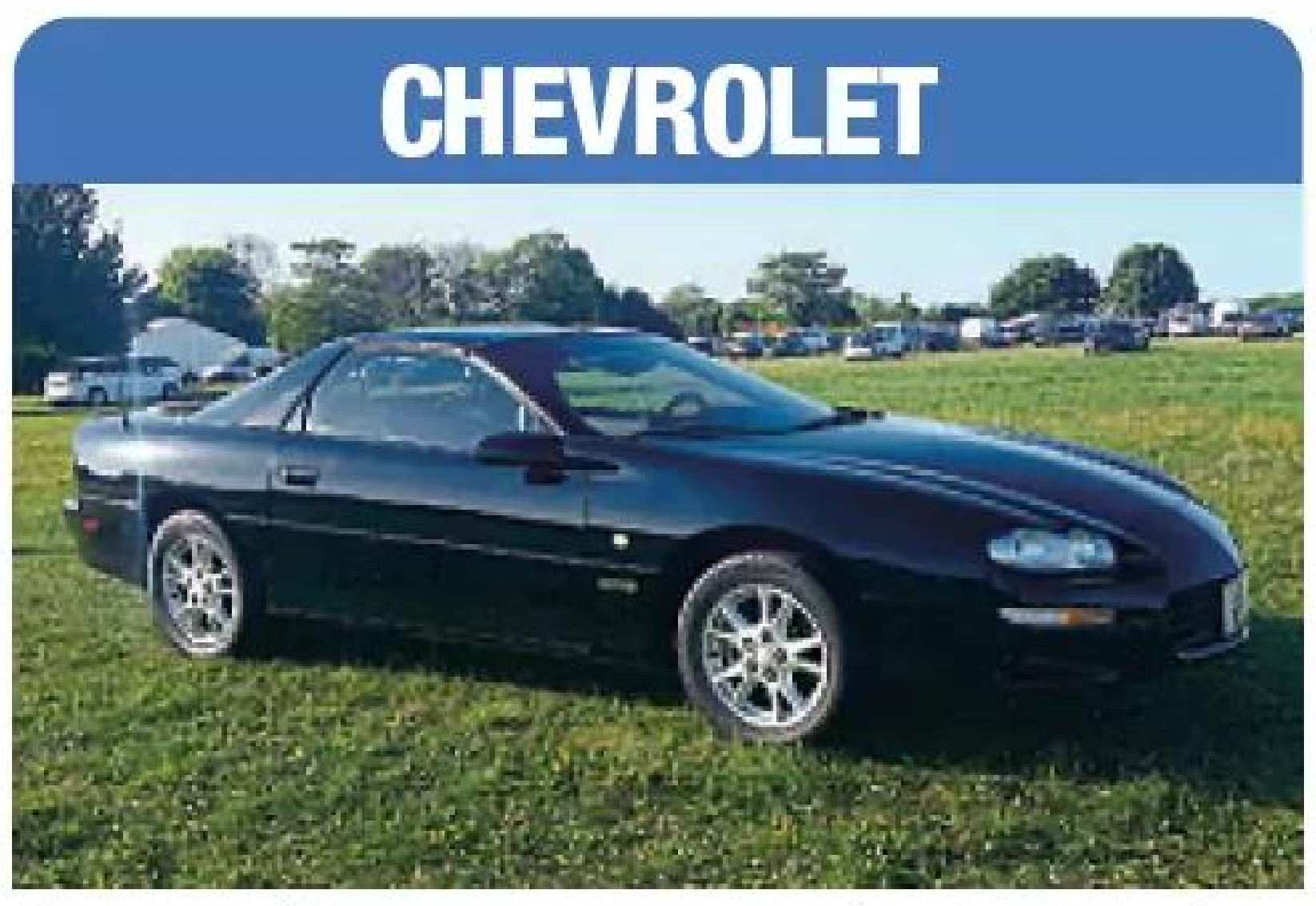

Camaro Z28, 2000, 6 speed, 31,000 miles, two owners, service history, MoT, alarm, ebony leather seats, stainless magnaflow exhaust, garaged, US spec, vgc, drives fantastic, **£10,500 Tel. 07415 502488.**

CHEVROLET

Corvette C5 50th Anniversary convertible, 6000 miles, like new condition, manual, new MoT, **£29,900**
Tel. 07767 824224.
Email. dlm@westphalia.co.uk

CHEVROLETTE

2500 Pick Up, 1995, Cheyenne, 5737cc, V8 PLG auto petrol, air con, 37,884 miles, MoT till August 2025, 8ft Fleetside, vgc, serviced, **£9500 p/x Ulez compliant suburban Tel. 07778 817027.** *Middx*

CHEVY

Camaro SS 35th Anniversary, 7000 miles, like new, serviced, MoT, new tyres, one of 943 produced with T-Tops & automatic, come and see it and make me an offer, **£19,900 Tel. 07767 824224.** *Hertfordshire*
Email. dlm@westphalia.co.uk

CORVETTE

C7 3LT auto, 2014, 39,000, LT1 6.2L V8 Z51, auto, 465BHP (pcm remap 517BHP), carbon fibre roof, carbon fibre hydrodip vents, intake, ceramic treatment
Email. keef@eurovettes.com

CORVETTE

C6 Convertible 2LT, 2007, 1st class example only 49,000 miles, Monterey red with tan interior and roof, HUD display, electric everything and power top, **£23,500**
Tel. 07768 324559. *Lancaster*
Email. john.huntington@infinis.com

CORVETTE

Convertible, 2000, beautiful condition, LSI engine, V8 Auto Led Lighting, head up display, cruise control multi CD, 12 months MoT, owned over 8 years, **£16,500**
Tel. 07581 140895.

DODGE

Challenger SRT Supercharged, 2009, manual 6 speed SRT Vortech supercharger Hurst shift, magnaflow exhaust, 25,900 miles, immaculate, racing coils, **£35,000**
Email. v8_stingray@yahoo.com

DODGE

Coronet 440, 2 Door Pillarless, 1966, original California car, full numbers matching 383 4 barrel big block engine, 727 auto gearbox and trans, **£32,000**
Tel. 07581 460395.
Email. richardshibden1962@gmail.com

FORD

Mustang GT Coupe 2015, 50th anniversary Limited Edition, 130,000KM, 5ltr V8, fully loaded, black leather interior, all extras, imported from Dubai, vgc, **£19,995**
Tel. 07850 390031. *Devon*

FORD

Thunderbird convertible, 1957, Starmist blue with a Colonial white hardtop, power everything, automatic, history, **£25,995**
Tel. 07548 100204.
Email. robbie.garrow@yahoo.co.uk

FORD

Thunderbird, 2005, anniversary model convertible, MoT April 2025, 26,000 miles, all new front and rear suspension,8 coil packs and plugs replaced, open to offers, **£12,500 Tel. 07881 580357.**

FORD

Thunderbird, 1964, 2 door Coupe 390 inch V8 4 barrel carb automatic California car dry state Phoenician yellow with raven black interior 3 owners 71,291 miles, **£12,000 Tel. 07957 271875.** *Middlesex*
Email. kevinhawgood7@gmail.com

FORD

F350 Ranger XLT460, big block V8 auto column change, 1978, 80,000 miles, 4 Michelin all terrain tyres, dual exhaust, running great, imported from Idaho, solid truck no rust, 8ft bed, **£18,500**
Tel. 00353 868067351.

FORD

Thunderbird 1976, only 36,000 original miles, vgc, much mechanical work done since imported by me three years ago, fully sorted, serviced, ready to go, **£15,900**
Tel. 07767 824224.

GMC

2011, Acadia Denali LHD, 120K miles, 7 seats, 3.6 V6 288bhp Auto, 25+mpg Personally US imported Feb 2015 owned for 10 years, heads up display,
Tel. 07702 156402.
Email. keef@eurovettes.com

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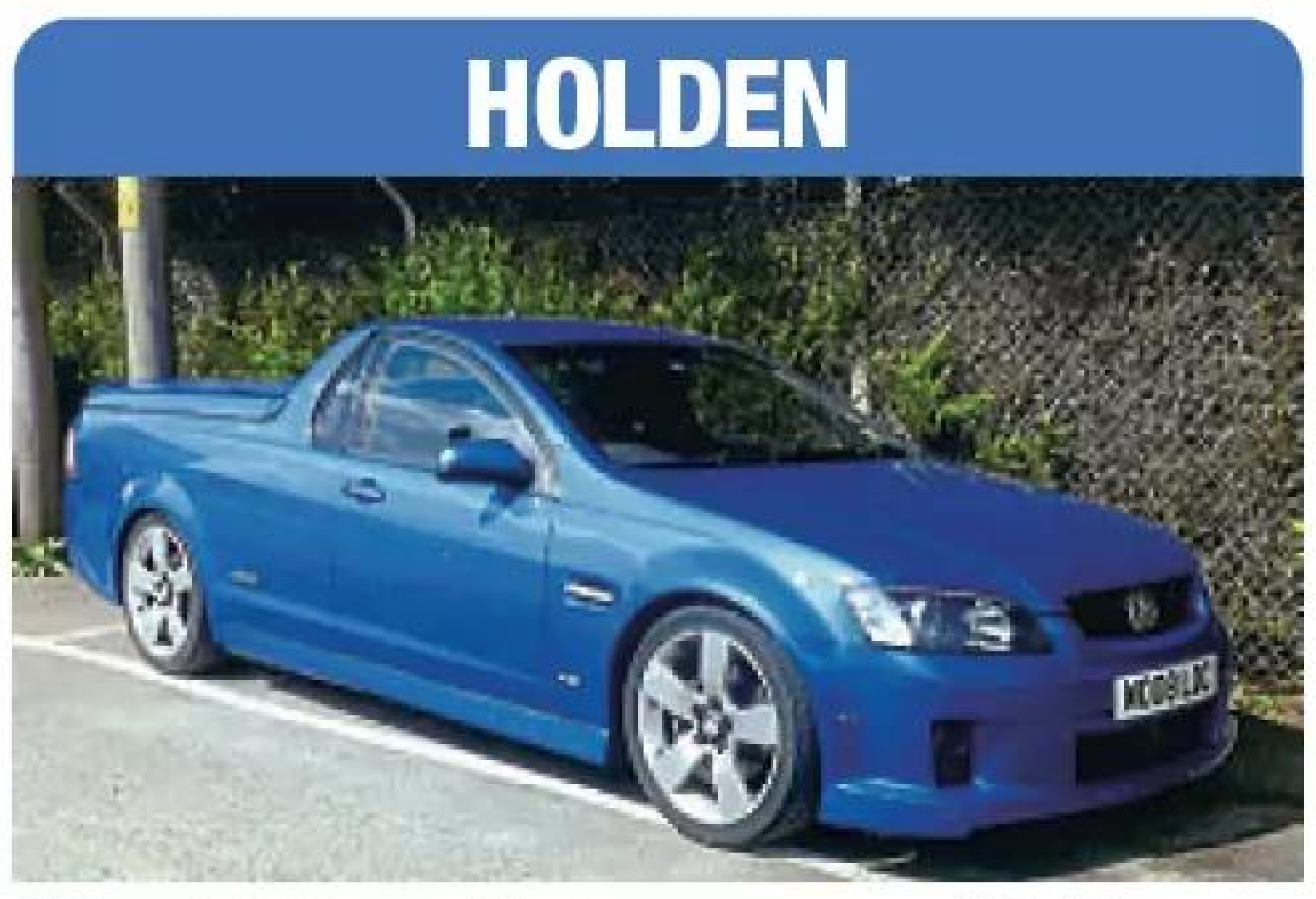
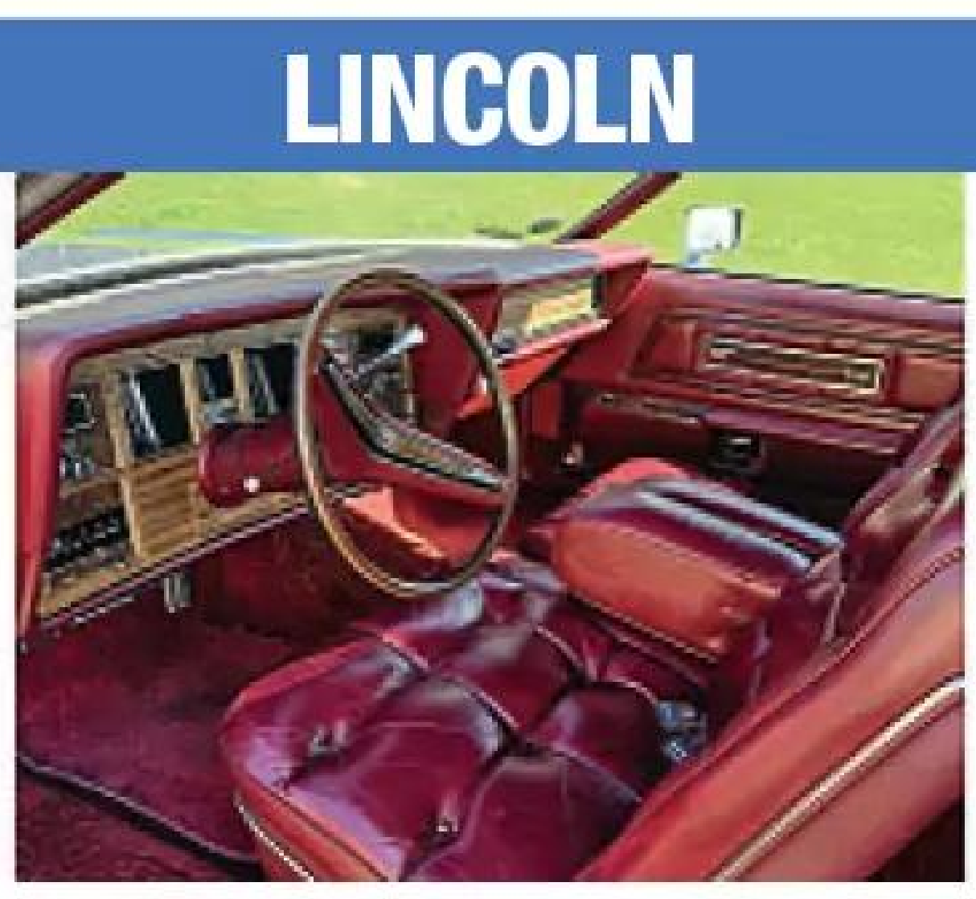


SS, 2008, will have new MoT, gas conversion, very nice condition inside and out, drives fantastic, 97,500 miles,
Tel. 07814 327522. *Bristol*

LINCOLN



Continental, 1973, Mark IV (72 rear) 460cu, 24,750 miles, custom made stainless steel exhaust, complete replacement original spec vinyl roof, vgc, **£19,500**
Tel. 07500 977667.
Email. *jamesv8clark66@gmail.com*

LINCOLN

Continental MK111, 1969, imported 8 years ago, very original condition and drives extremely well, **£10,995**
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Email. anthony.powell77@ntlworld.com

MERCURY

Cougar, 1978, 93,000 miles, t&t exempt, but is MoT'd April 2026, rock solid, many new parts fitted including tyres, **£7300**
Tel. 07879 292407.

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Holiday 98, 1955, 2 door coupe, excellent condition, originally from LA, call for more information, **£34,000**
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Email. raybrown.1959@yahoo.co.uk

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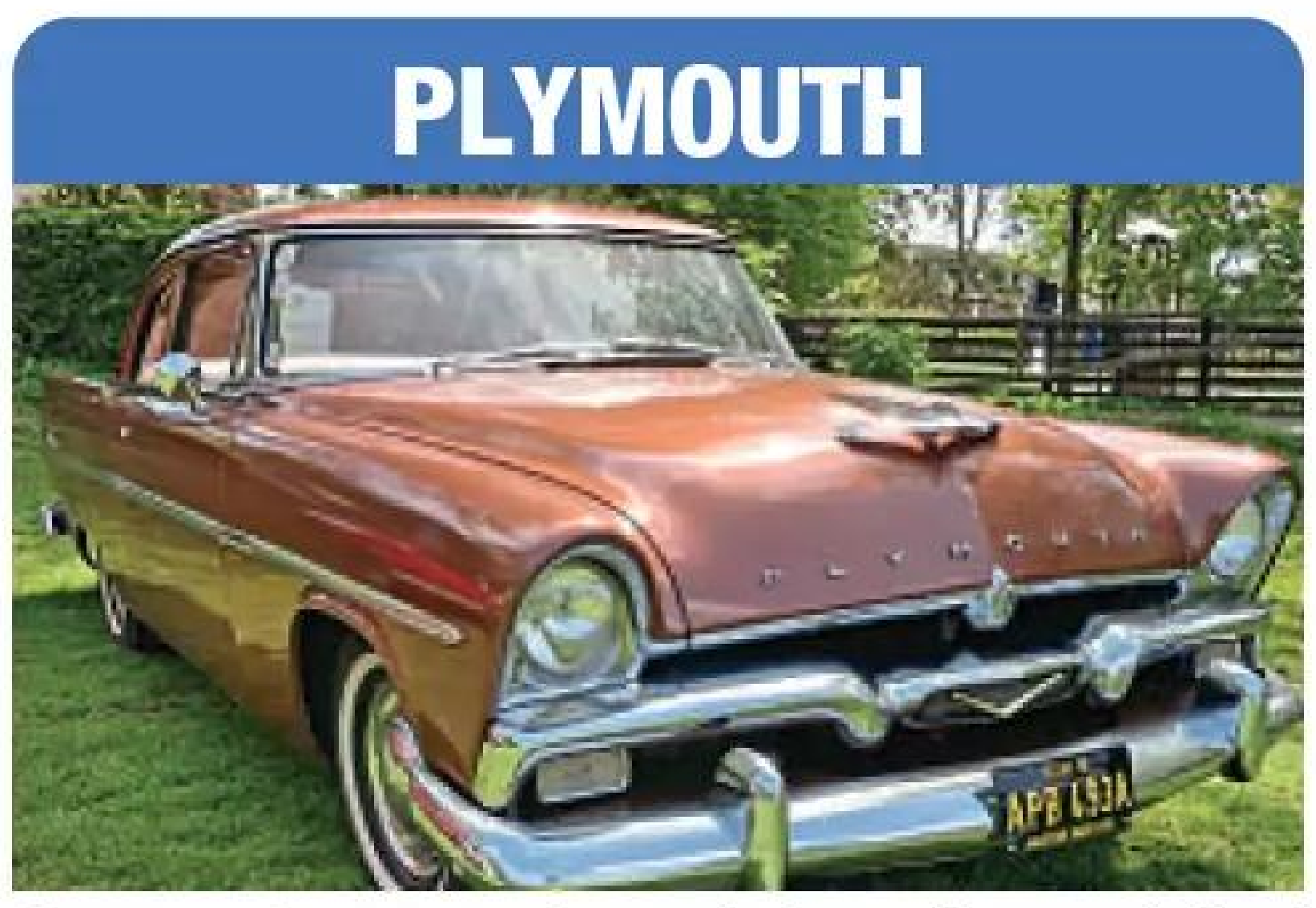
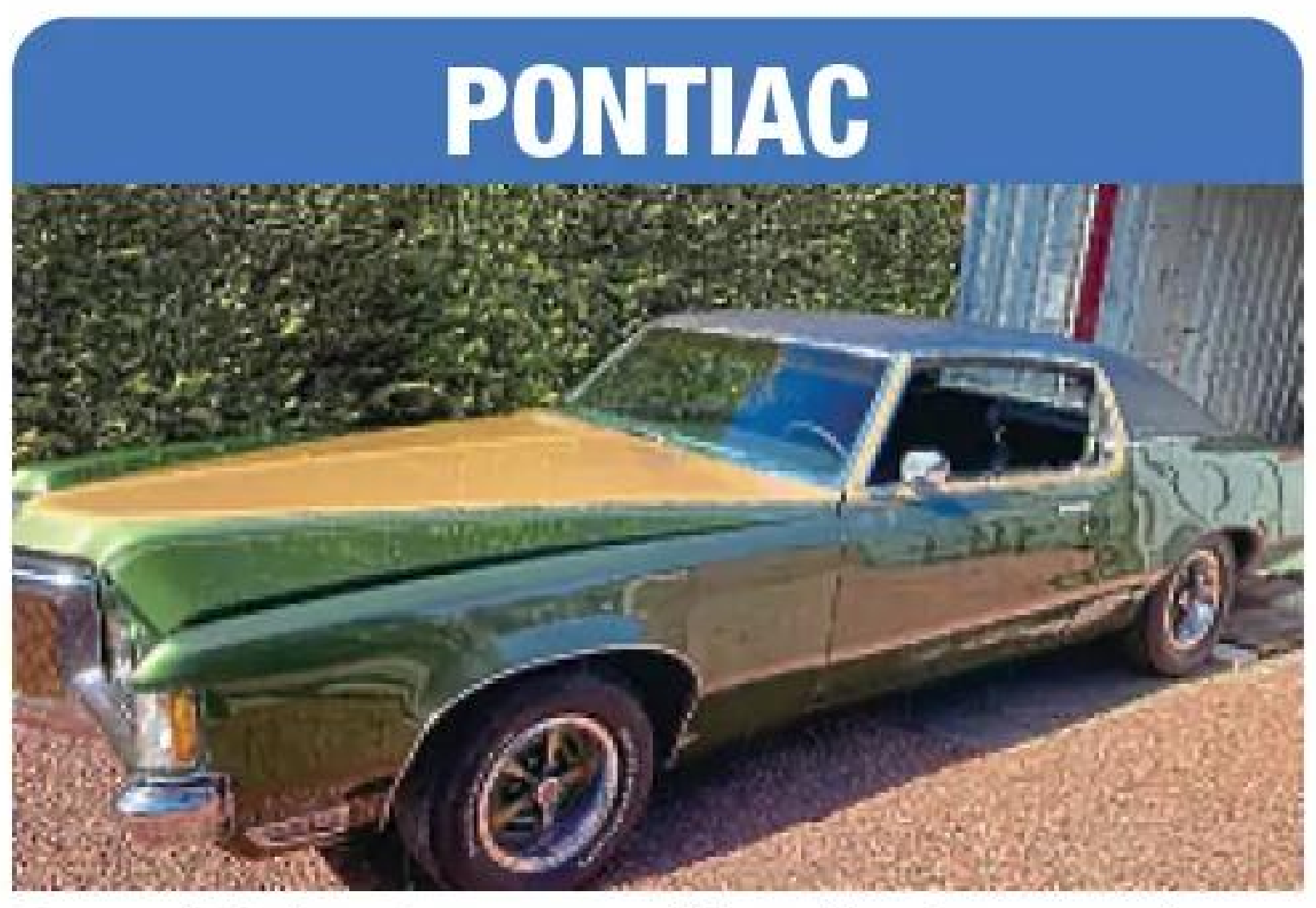


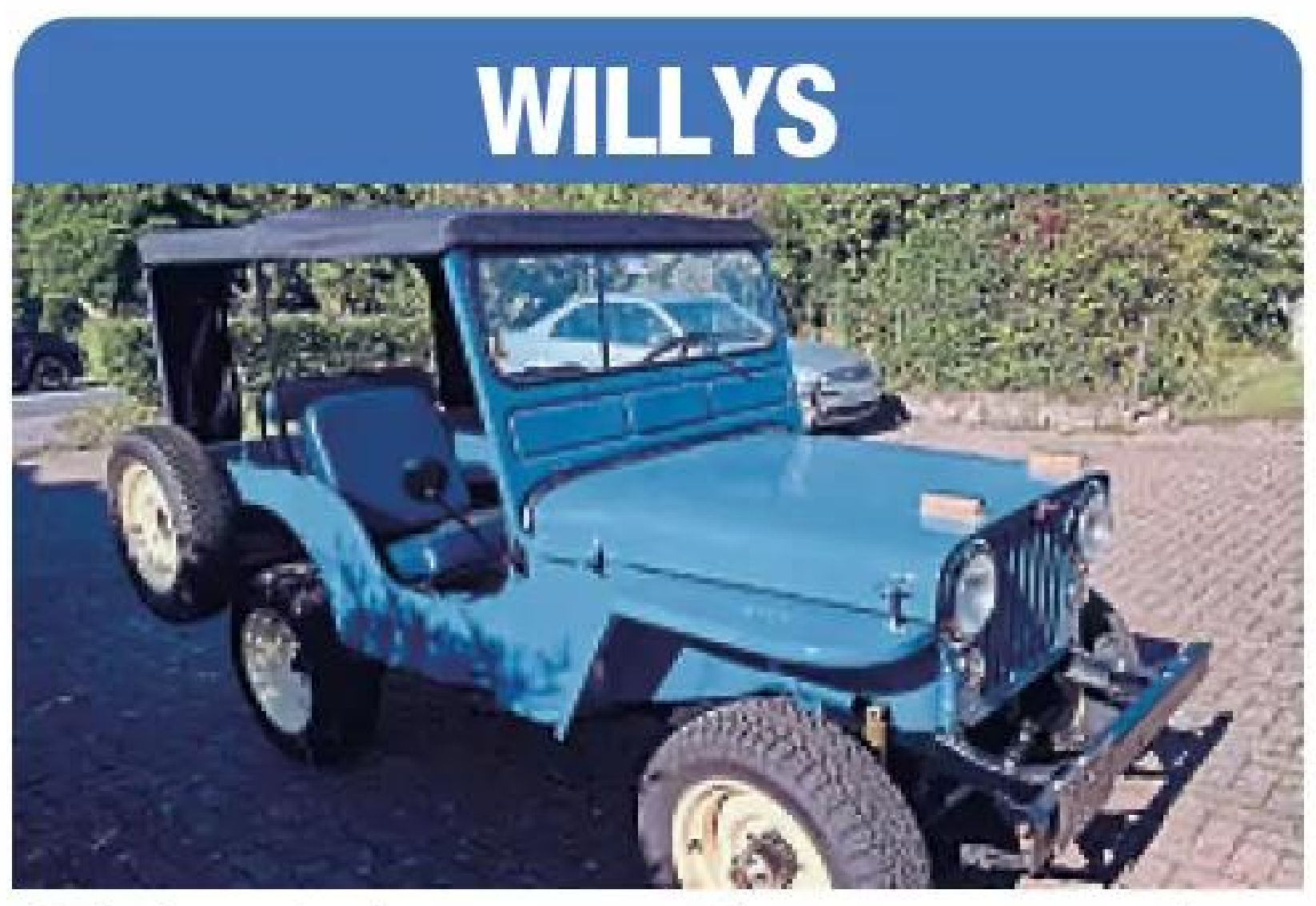
Savoy, 1956, 2 door club sedan, original bronze colour, original interior and valve radio, Three in the tree column shift coupled to a 277ci V8 engine, **£11,500**
Tel. 07958 748531.
Email. jsstorey5828@btinternet.com

PONTIAC



Grand Prix, 1970, 7.5V8 pillarless, 2 door, excellent condition, show winner drives great, t&t exempt, two tone metallic green and gold, **£16,500**
Tel. 01665 579324.

WILLYS



CJ2A, 1947, ground up restoration, rebore, new parts throughout, overhauled gearbox, axles, new tank, brakes, tyres, wheels, seats, exhaust, screen, top carb, **£18,000 ono Tel. 07944 471040.** *Kent*
Email. Keithpalmar350@hotmail.co.uk

For Sale

BUICK Roadmaster, 1994, 5.7 V8, five good alloy wheels with Whitewall, tyres, good condition, auto box, excellent engine pulls like a train, but emission problem, project or spares, £1500. Tel. 07780 221502.

CHEVROLET Camaro, 2000, V6 auto Targa tops, grey leather, MoT Dec 2025, US car European spec, drives sport flow exhaust, WSM book, call for details £2995. Tel. 07918 684626.

CHRYSLER Stratus 2.5ltr V6, 1999, convertible, full records of maintenance back to 2015, £1300. Tel. 07549 105284. Leeds. Email. frank.stalgis@gmail.com

FORD Mustang 2004 40th Anniversary Model, 3.9 litre V6 in metallic silver 59, 637 miles, automatic transmission with dark charcoal interior, comes with stainless steel exhaust, £9750. Tel. Pete 01159 324781. Derbyshire. Email. chappo2304@gmail.com

FORD Mustang, 1966 F plate, 289GT, 2+2 fast back, complete care, in need of restoration, new and s/hand parts if required, best offers. Tel. 01932 259824. Surrey.

FORD Thunderbird Landau, 1965, V8 390 automatic white with black interior, power steering, windows and brakes, dual exhausts systems, good chrome, excellent inside and outside, good floors, manuals included, £8000 ono. Tel. 07718 780844. Bristol.

Parts For Sale

BONNET hood off a 1964 half, hard top Mustang, no rust or dents, in primer, buyer collects, original not a copy, offers. Tel. 07707 2366627. Email. harris.lynn54@yahoo.com

CAMPER body fits Chevy pick-up, needs work, same type of body that Clint Eastwood had in in film. Email. sb_200@hotmail.com

CHEVROLET Bel-Air, 1955, original front drum brake set up, removed from my car several years ago when I converted it to Power vented front disc brakes, drums are not scored and brake shoes have plenty of meat left on them. Also, includes the original non-power master cylinder, does not include wheel spindles, £75. Tel. 07773 037322. West Middlesex. Email. terrypocock@btinternet.com

MUSTANG 1964 convertible, 289 engine rebuild, respray new roof seats carpets trim wheels tyres exhaust and much more. Tel. 07940 457322. Essex. Email. stevewoodard54@yahoo.com

PONTIAC Rear light lenses, fuel gauge, neutral safety switch all in original boxes, offers. Tel. 01884 254099. Devon.

ROLL-N-LOCK M series truck bed cover, new still boxed p/n LG145M fits 1997-2003 Ford F150 with Flareside bed, original cost in excess of £1200 heavy duty torsion spring drive system, Marine grade vinyl over aluminum slat, intergrated autolock which automatically locks tailgate, easy clamp on installation, £400. Tel. 07973 210335. Surrey. Email. carlbwalters@googlemail.com

TRANS AM 1978 bits and pieces, too much to list, carburettors all four barrelled, two brand new for Chevy V8, engines one big block, one rebored and crank reground, new alloy heads, new pistons, gaskets ect, new build all work done by Real Steel, London. Tel. 07912 843469 or 07885 970642.

Waned

FORD F250, 1974 wanted 16” 8 stud steel wheel rim with or with out tyre . Tel. 07747 636421. Northants.

GM NP208 32 spline 4x4 input transfer case or 32 spline shaft. Also possibly TH400 from 4x4 Blazer Jimmy if bargain price or swap BMC factory recon A-series early gearbox. Tel. 07955 553684.

Miscellaneous

BOOK Workbench How To Rebuild The Small Block Ford, as new condition, £10 plus £5 postage. Tel. 01253 810454

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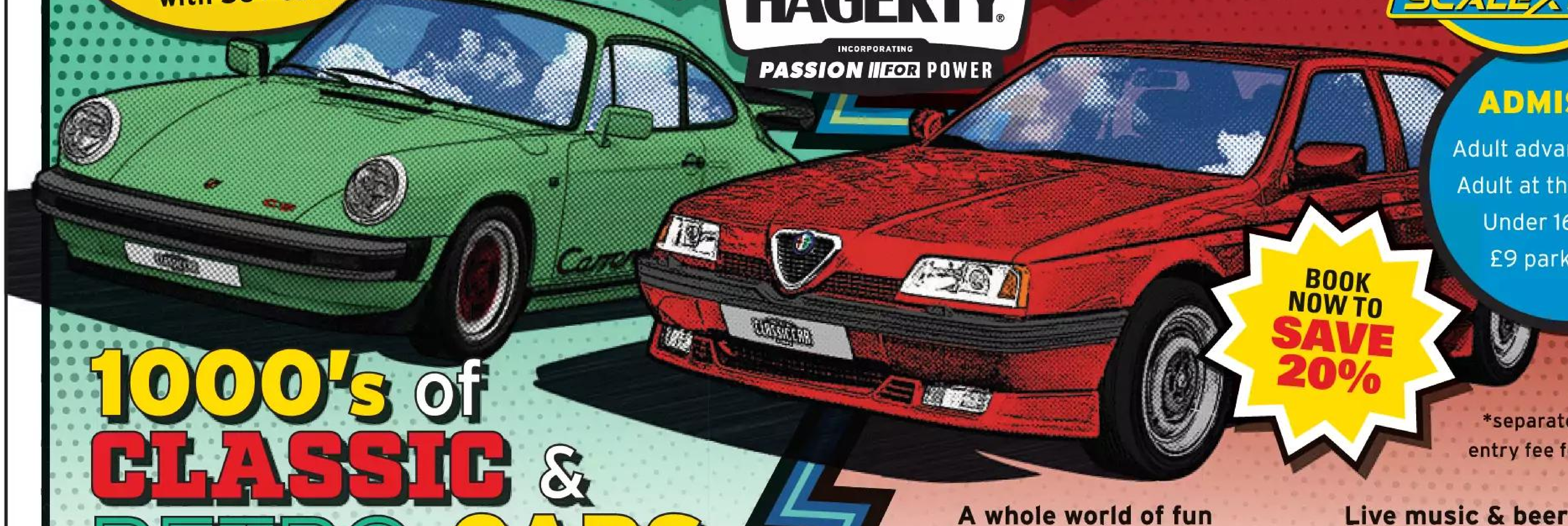

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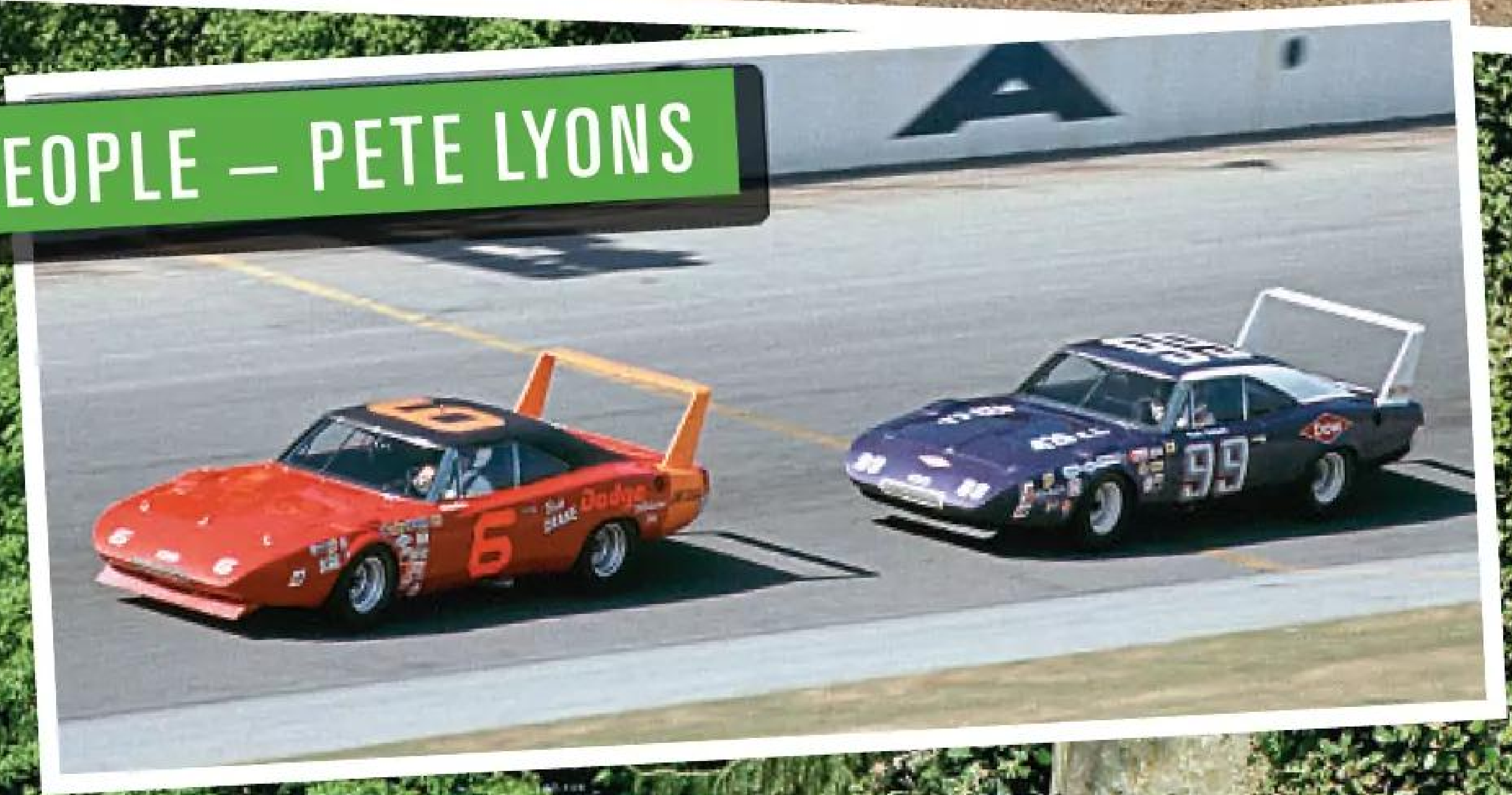

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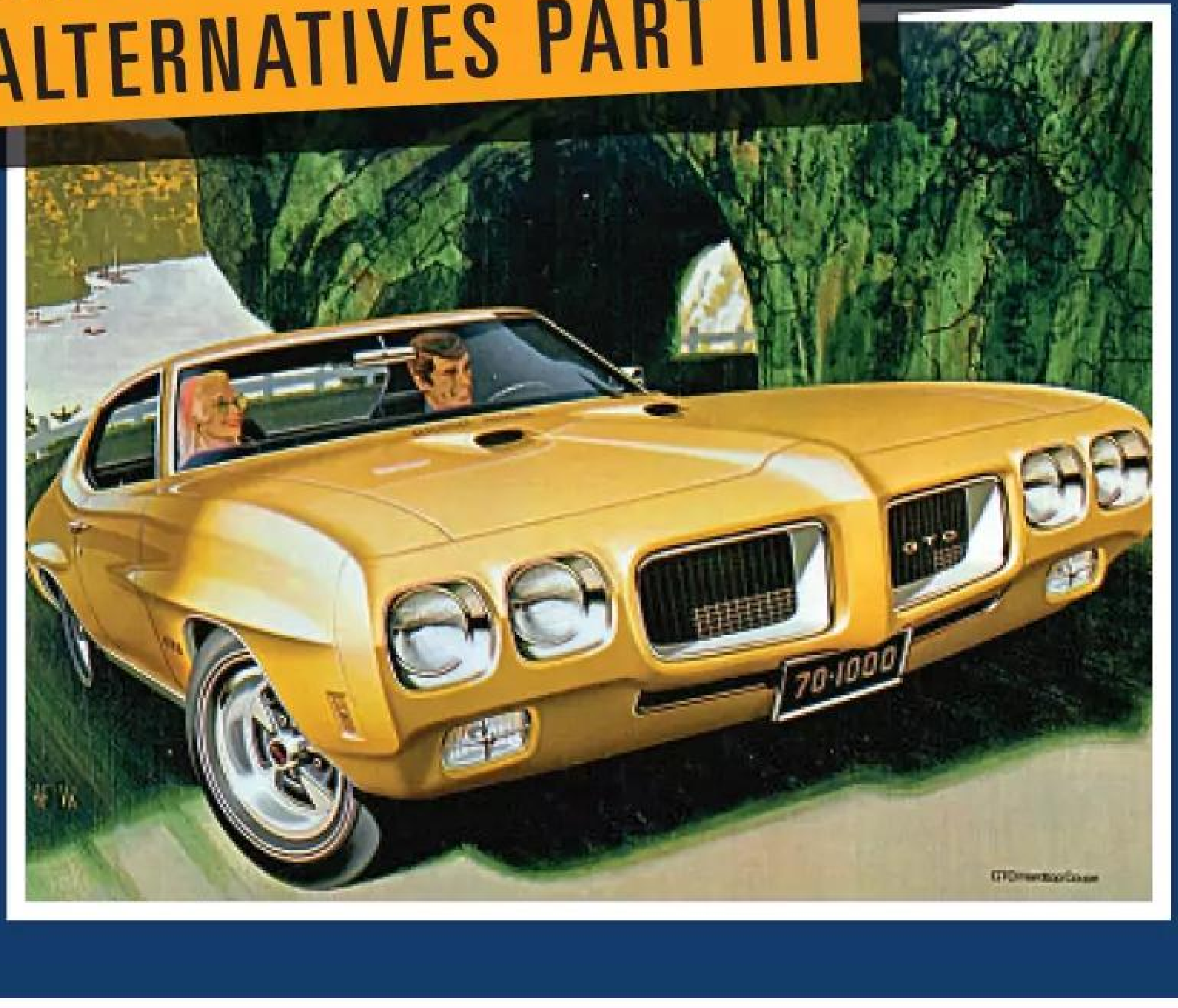

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